msod

medical schools outcomes database

NATIONAL DATA REPORT 2022

RESPONSES FROM FINAL YEAR STUDENTS AT AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL SCHOOLS

2017—2021 DATA

Medical Deans

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

July 2022

MEDICAL SCHOOLS OUTCOMES DATABASE

National Data Report 2022

BACKGROUND

The Medical Schools Outcomes Database (MSOD) is an annual national data collection conducted by Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand (Medical Deans). The data are collected through an annual survey administered to final year medical students from all medical schools across Australia. The survey collects information on final year demographics, previous and current education, medical school experiences, rural background, career intentions and future practice location and speciality preferences.

The MSOD project commenced in 2005 and has been run each year, providing a valuable, unique, national resource of comprehensive data and insights on Australian medical final year students. The MSOD currently contains over 38,000 participants and is stored and managed by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) on behalf of Medical Deans.

This report does not incorporate the New Zealand data. A similar project is conducted in New Zealand by the Universities of Auckland and Otago, with similar questions and with the support of the New Zealand Ministry of Health. The New Zealand MSOD reports can be found at https://www.otago.ac.nz/oms/education/mbchb/about/accountability/external/msod-project/index.html?utm_source=dynamic&utm_medium=redirection&utm_campaign=nzmsod&utm_term=&utm_content=

Medical Deans would like to express our thanks to all the final year medical students over the years who have taken time to provide these data and contributed to the development of this resource; to inform and shape the development of informed, evidence-based, and effective medical education and health workforce policy. We also gratefully acknowledge the support of the Australian government for its funding support of the MSOD.

Please note: this survey is intended to capture information from students completing their medical school studies. Therefore, for any respondents who had repeated their final year, only their most recent response is reported and any earlier response has been subsequently removed from last year's data.

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Contact Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand

Call: +61 2 8084 6557
Website: https://www.medicaldeans.org.au
Email: admin@medicaldeans.org.au

MEDICAL SCHOOLS OUTCOMES DATABASE

National Data Report 2022

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides the findings that were captured by the 2021 Medical Schools Outcomes Database (MSOD) survey, presenting data from the 5 years 2017 to 2021.

The MSOD survey was administered to final year students in medical schools across Australia towards the end of 2021, with a 49 per cent response rate (1,860 respondents from a cohort of 3,807). Demographic characteristics of the respondents remained broadly similar to the prior years. Typically, the survey has a higher response rate from females and this year was no different, with a 56 per cent female response rate; from a final year cohort where the gender ratio was 53 per cent female [1]. The 2021 survey respondents had a similar age profile to the 2020 group, however an older maximum age. As for last year, 14 per cent were over 30 years old, and those in a relationship or married were slightly in the majority. Just over 4 per cent had children with 2 per cent having other dependents; with these figures remaining very consistent since this data started being collected in 2013.

Thirty-nine per cent of respondents indicated a preference for a career working outside a capital city, an increase over last year's figure of 34 per cent. The MSOD confirms findings from other data that students from a rural background express higher levels of desire to practice in rural or regional locations; with 45 per cent of respondents from rural backgrounds preferring to work in a Regional city/large town, smaller town or small community versus 12 per cent of respondents from a non-rural background (Table 25). This holds true for both domestic and international students. Overall, domestic students were more likely than international students to want to work in these locations – 20 per cent versus 14 per cent (Table 24). A notable change from last year's data is the decrease in domestic students wanting to work in a capital city, dropping from 66 per cent to 60.

This year's data again confirmed the strong association between rural club membership and a stated preference at the time of graduation for a future practice outside of a capital city, with members of rural clubs 4.4 times more likely to express this preference.

The MSOD also indicates that rural-background students indicate a higher interest in Indigenous health being a part of their future medical career – 64 per cent versus 47 per cent for non-rural background, however just under a third of non-rural students are undecided (compared with 23 per cent of rural students).

Levels of interest in a career that involved teaching and research have been consistently high over the years, and this year is no different; with 87 per cent interested in teaching being part of their future, and 59 per cent interested in research. The proportions for domestic and international students are similar.

1 Medical Deans' Student Statistics Dashboard https://medicaldeans.org.au/data/data-dashboard/ (*note*: selecting the Graduates tab for the year 2021 shows the number of final year students; i.e.; the projected number that are able to graduate that year as no attrition has been applied)

Preferences for future practice across the disciplines have remained consistent over the years of the survey (Table 30). The category of "Adult medicine/internal medicine/physician" has retained the highest preference since 2014. General practice and surgery have consistently been the 2nd and 3rd preferred choice for these 5 years of data, with paediatrics and child health, anaesthesia, and emergency medicine comprising the remaining choices for the top 6 over this time period.

2021 was the first survey that included Rural Generalist as an option, and this joined the list as the 9th most preferred specialty. A Rural Generalist is a practitioner within the formal General Practice specialty, combining these two gives a percentage of 18.6 choosing a General Practice specialty as their first preference. For Domestic students, a combination of General Practice and Rural Generalist was the most preferred first choice, selected by just under 20 per cent of respondents.

'Atmosphere/work culture typical of the discipline' remained the most highly ranked factor in influencing the preferred choice of discipline. 'Alignment with personal values' and the 'Experience of the specialty as a medical student' have also been consistently highly rated as factors. Along with 'General medical school experiences' and the 'Intellectual content of the specialty', these factors have been the five highest rated in each survey since 2014.

Levels of satisfaction with the medical program at universities increased, with 76 per cent indicating they agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their courses – returning to the levels previously indicated after a drop in this figure in 2019. The percentage dissatisfied or very dissatisfied remained at 10 per cent. The satisfaction levels for international students were lower, which is a consistent finding.

Similarly, the proportion of students in overall agreement that their basic medical degree was preparing them well for work as an intern increased, to 79 per cent – the highest figure in this data series. The proportion disagreeing or strongly disagreeing also dropped to the lowest level in this period.

Note: Data on the full 2021 medical student cohort, as referenced in this Report, is accessible from the Medical Deans' Data Dashboard https://medicaldeans.org.au/data/data-dashboard/

SECTION 1: MSOD SURVEY RESPONSE RATES

Medical school response rates

In 2021, there were 3,807 final year students across all Australian medical schools of which 49 per cent (or 1,860) responded to the MSOD survey; a slightly higher response rate than the previous year. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to have an impact, with medical students reporting a high level of online and survey fatigue which schools felt affected the response rate.

Table 1. Respondents by medical school – All students

School attended	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
The University of Adelaide	55	2.6	80	3.6	51	2.5	55	3.2	8	0.4
Australian National University	47	2.2	86	3.9	70	3.4	53	3.1	81	4.4
Bond University	27	1.3	56	2.5	53	2.6	44	2.6	73	3.9
Curtin University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	49	2.6
Deakin University	100	4.7	117	5.3	110	5.4	104	6.0	102	5.5
Flinders University	93	4.4	12	0.5	29	1.4	25	1.5	27	1.5
Griffith University	83	3.9	92	4.2	44	2.2	23	1.3	38	2.0
James Cook University	100	4.7	69	3.1	93	4.6	0	0	101	5.4
Macquarie University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	21	1.1
The University of Melbourne	164	7.8	193	8.8	95	4.7	104	6.0	127	6.8
Monash University	303	14.3	350	15.9	347	17.0	404	23.5	353	19.0
The University of Newcastle/University of New England	73	3.4	99	4.5	134	6.6	121	7.0	99	5.3
The University of New South Wales	124	5.9	130	5.9	80	3.9	98	5.7	71	3.8
The University of Notre Dame (Fremantle)	40	1.9	48	2.2	51	2.5	55	3.2	79	4.2
The University of Notre Dame (Sydney)	51	2.4	53	2.4	48	2.4	39	2.3	33	1.8
The University of Queensland	329	15.5	283	12.9	227	11.1	192	11.2	201	10.8
The University of Sydney	273	12.9	252	11.4	255	12.5	110	6.4	114	6.1
University of Tasmania	86	4.1	97	4.4	74	3.6	85	4.9	108	5.8
The University of Western Australia	91	4.3	131	5.9	152	7.5	139	8.1	87	4.7
Western Sydney University	24	1.1	23	1.0	64	3.1	30	1.7	38	2.0
University of Wollongong	53	2.5	31	1.4	60	2.9	40	2.3	50	2.7
Total	**2,116**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Domestic students

1,593 of the respondents (86 per cent) were domestic students; a slightly higher proportion than the full final year cohort, which comprised 84 per cent domestic students.

Table 2. Respondents by medical school – Domestic students only

School attended	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
The University of Adelaide	53	2.9	64	3.4	45	2.6	50	3.4	7	0.4
Australian National University	42	2.3	80	4.2	63	3.6	49	3.3	70	4.4
Bond University	27	1.5	56	3.0	53	3.0	44	3.0	73	4.6
Curtin University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	49	3.1
Deakin University	98	5.4	115	6.1	104	5.9	98	6.6	94	5.9
Flinders University	86	4.8	10	0.5	26	1.5	24	1.6	26	1.6
Griffith University	82	4.5	91	4.8	41	2.3	18	1.2	35	2.2
James Cook University	90	5.0	60	3.2	80	4.6	0	0	86	5.4
Macquarie University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	20	1.3
The University of Melbourne	152	8.4	174	9.2	86	4.9	95	6.4	116	7.3
Monash University	255	14.1	276	14.6	286	16.3	337	22.9	271	17.0
The University of Newcastle/University of New England	63	3.5	90	4.8	117	6.7	105	7.1	89	5.6
The University of New South Wales	93	5.1	109	5.8	67	3.8	79	5.4	54	3.4
The University of Notre Dame (Fremantle)	39	2.2	48	2.5	51	2.9	55	3.7	79	5.0
The University of Notre Dame (Sydney)	51	2.8	53	2.8	48	2.7	39	2.6	33	2.1
The University of Queensland	228	12.6	201	10.7	186	10.6	145	9.8	159	10.0
The University of Sydney	223	12.3	201	10.7	194	11.0	89	6.0	88	5.5
University of Tasmania	67	3.7	87	4.6	58	3.3	68	4.6	91	5.7
The University of Western Australia	90	5.0	121	6.4	140	8.0	126	8.5	80	5.0
Western Sydney University	21	1.2	22	1.2	60	3.4	24	1.6	31	1.9
University of Wollongong	49	2.7	29	1.5	52	3.0	29	2.0	42	2.6
Total	**1,809**	**100.0**	**1,887**	**100.0**	**1,757**	**100.0**	**1,474**	**100.0**	**1,593**	**100.0**

Note: Throughout this Report:

- Domestic students comprise Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents, and New Zealand citizens
- International student figures are only for those enrolled in on-shore medical programs, and do not include students enrolled in Australian medical programs run in other countries.

Table 3 shows those medical schools which had a response from their international students; noting that not all schools enrol international students.

Fourteen per cent of the respondents, or 267, were international students (enrolled in on-shore medical programs); a lower proportion than the cohort which comprised 16 per cent international students.

Table 3. Respondents by medical school – International on-shore students only

School attended	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
The University of Adelaide	2	0.7	16	5.1	6	2.1	5	2.0	1	0.4
Australian National University	5	1.6	6	1.9	7	2.5	4	1.6	11	4.1
Deakin University	2	0.7	2	0.6	6	2.1	6	2.4	8	3.0
Flinders University	7	2.3	2	0.6	3	1.1	1	0.4	1	0.4
Griffith University	1	0.3	1	0.3	3	1.1	5	2.0	3	1.1
James Cook University	10	3.3	9	2.9	13	4.6	0	0	15	5.6
Macquarie University	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	0.4
The University of Melbourne	12	3.9	19	6.0	9	3.2	9	3.6	11	4.1
Monash University	48	15.6	74	23.5	61	21.8	67	27.1	82	30.7
The University of Newcastle/University of New England	10	3.3	9	2.9	17	6.1	16	6.5	10	3.7
The University of New South Wales	31	10.1	21	6.7	13	4.6	19	7.7	17	6.4
The University of Notre Dame (Fremantle)	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The University of Queensland	101	32.9	82	26.0	41	14.6	47	19.0	42	15.7
The University of Sydney	50	16.3	51	16.2	61	21.8	21	8.5	26	9.7
University of Tasmania	19	6.2	10	3.2	16	5.7	17	6.9	17	6.4
The University of Western Australia	1	0.3	10	3.2	12	4.3	13	5.3	7	2.6
Western Sydney University	3	1.0	1	0.3	4	1.4	6	2.4	7	2.6
University of Wollongong	4	1.3	2	0.6	8	2.9	11	4.5	8	3.0
Total	**307**	**100.0**	**315**	**100.0**	**280**	**100.0**	**247**	**100.0**	**267**	**100.0**

Note: Those schools who do not have any international students enrolled are omitted from this Table; i.e., Bond University, Macquarie University, and University of Notre Dame Australia (Sydney Medical School).

Proportion by medical program length

The sample is fairly representative of the proportions enrolled in 4-year programs, with a strong response rate from those in 5-year courses and fewer from those in a 6-year program.

Table 4. Number of final year students across all Australian medical schools, showing course length

Course Length	Final year students 2021		MSOD respondents 2021	
	n	%	*n*	%
4-year course	2,274	56.4	1,077	57.9
5-year course	905	22.4	603	32.4
6-year course	628	15.6	180	9.7
Total	**3,807**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Source: Medical Deans' Data Dashboard https://medicaldeans.org.au/data/data-dashboard/

Note: Similar MSOD response rates have been assumed for different length courses at the same medical school, as the responses cannot be distinguished

Respondents by state/territory

Again, this year Victorian schools had a higher response to the survey, and so their students form a majority of respondents. South Australia had a low response rate this year. Note: Table 5 and Table 6 refer to the location where students were studying medicine which may be different to where they identify their primary residence to be.

Table 5. Respondents by state/territory

State/territory of completion	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
ACT	47	2.2	86	3.9	70	3.4	53	3.1	81	4.4
NSW	598	28.3	588	26.7	641	31.5	438	25.5	426	22.9
QLD	539	25.5	500	22.7	417	20.5	259	15.0	413	22.2
SA	148	7.0	92	4.2	80	3.9	80	4.6	35	1.9
TAS	86	4.1	97	4.4	74	3.6	85	4.9	108	5.8
VIC	567	26.8	660	30.0	552	27.1	612	35.6	582	31.3
WA	131	6.2	179	8.1	203	10.0	194	11.3	215	11.6
Total	**2,116**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Note: Data for Flinders Medical School in Darwin cannot be separately identified and so those responses are included in South Australia figures

Table 6. Respondents and students: comparison by state/territory

State/territory of study	Final year students in 2021		MSOD respondents in 2021	
	n	%	*n*	%
ACT	111	2.9	81	4.4
NSW	1105	29.0	426	22.9
QLD	873	22.9	413	22.2
SA	316	8.3	35	1.9
TAS	120	3.2	108	5.8
VIC	901	23.7	582	31.3
WA	381	10.0	215	11.6
Total	**3,807**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Note: Flinders Darwin Medical School is included in South Australia figures

SECTION 2: DEMOGRAPHICS

The gender balance of respondents was 56 per cent female and 44 per cent male with a small number (8) identifying as non-binary or unspecified. The full cohort of the 2021 final year students was 51.8 per cent female, 48.1 per cent male, and 0.1 per cent non-binary or unspecified.

Table 7. Respondents by gender

Gender	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Female	1,150	54.2	1,168	52.3	1,099	53.5	983	57.1	1,036	55.7
Male	966	45.8	1,031	47.5	936	46.4	736	42.8	816	43.9
Non-binary / Unspecified	0	0.0	3	0.2	2	0.1	2	0.1	8	0.4
Total	**2,116**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Student age

In 2021, the final year students who responded to the survey were primarily aged between 25 and 29, with just under 45 per cent within this category – very close to last year's figure. Just over 86 per cent were aged under 30 years old, with only 2 per cent over 40 years old. These figures indicate a slightly younger cohort over the last few years.

Table 8. Respondents by age group

Age group	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
<25	790	37.4	822	37.4	819	40.2	720	41.8	768	41.3
25-29	1,002	47.4	1,069	48.6	952	46.7	766	44.5	834	44.8
30-34	218	10.3	217	9.9	179	8.8	175	10.2	176	9.5
35-39	77	3.6	57	2.6	45	2.2	33	1.9	45	2.4
40-44	16	0.8	22	1.0	30	1.5	20	1.2	23	1.2
45+	10	0.5	13	0.6	12	0.6	7	0.4	14	0.8
Total	**2,113**	**100.0**	**2,200**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

The median age of respondents remained consistent at 25 years old, as did the minimum age of the 2021 respondents at 21.

Table 9. Median age of respondents

Age	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Median	25	25	25	25	25
Minimum	19	21	19	21	21
Maximum	54	62	58	51	59

Relationship and dependants

The proportion of respondents identifying as having a partner (i.e., in a relationship or married) has remained slightly in the majority this year.

Table 10. Partner status

Partner status	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Partnered	1,023	48.3	1,033	46.9	943	46.3	885	51.4	940	50.5
Not partnered	1,093	51.7	1,169	53.1	1,094	53.7	836	48.6	920	49.5
Total	**2,116**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Just over 4 per cent of respondents have dependent children, with the numbers varying very little from previous years' data. Similarly, the vast majority have no 'other dependants', with again little change over the years.

Table 11. Number of dependent children and other dependants

Dependent children & other dependants	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Children										
0	2,000	95.1	2,088	94.8	1,940	95.2	1,652	96.0	1,781	95.8
1	47	2.2	55	2.5	48	2.4	28	1.6	37	2.0
2	38	1.8	44	2.0	33	1.6	29	1.7	28	1.5
3 or more	17	0.8	15	0.7	16	0.8	12	0.7	14	0.8
Total	**2,102**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**
Other										
0	2,044	98.0	2,150	97.6	1,980	97.2	1,676	97.4	1,822	98.0
1	31	1.5	32	1.5	40	2.0	34	2.0	31	1.7
2	6	0.3	12	0.5	13	0.6	6	0.3	7	0.4
3 or more	4	0.2	8	0.4	4	0.2	5	0.3	0	0.0
Total	**2,085**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Country of birth

Table 12 shows the countries with the highest representation of survey respondents over the last decade; with the proportion of respondents born in Australia remaining fairly stable at around two thirds of the total.

The proportion of students born in Singapore remains consistently high, and for those born in India. There was an increase in the number of Canadian-born respondents, however the representation of students born in the USA dropped outside the top 10 with Hong Kong returning to the list.

Table 12. Country of birth (top 10)

Country of birth	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Australia	1,367	64.6	1,446	65.7	1,371	67.3	1,141	66.3	1,216	65.4
Singapore	91	4.3	104	4.7	93	4.6	89	5.2	96	5.2
India	52	2.5	52	2.4	52	2.6	52	3.0	64	3.4
Canada	74	3.5	54	2.5	56	2.7	43	2.5	57	3.1
Malaysia	56	2.6	72	3.3	50	2.5	38	2.2	49	2.6
New Zealand	44	2.1	42	1.9	54	2.7	42	2.4	45	2.4
England	50	2.4	36	1.6	37	1.8	29	1.7	35	1.9
Sri Lanka	27	1.3	15	0.7	23	1.1	33	1.9	30	1.6
China (excludes SARs and Taiwan)	52	2.5	60	2.7	35	1.7	37	2.1	29	1.6
Hong Kong (SAR of China)	27	1.3	32	1.5	17	0.8	26	1.5	26	1.4
Other	276	13.0	289	13.1	249	12.2	191	11.1	211	11.4
Total	**2,116**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,858**	**100.0**

Sources of income

The majority of respondents relied on family (72 per cent) although this was fewer than last year, as was the proportion indicating Government support (63 per cent). Whilst those responding with HECS / FEE / OS HELP loans also fell slightly this year, the number has been rising consistently during the course of the MSOD survey, with the data increasing 13 per cent since 2013 (when it was 41.5 per cent [2]). Notably this year, those responding with a scholarship as a source of income dropped by nearly 6 per cent, and the number with a personal loan also continued to fall.

Table 13. Sources of income for education and/or living expenses for entire medical degree

Income sources	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Family	1,523	71.9	1,608	73.0	1,501	73.6	1,295	75.2	1,333	71.6
Government	1,351	63.8	1,376	62.4	1,326	65.0	1,129	65.6	1,175	63.1
HECS/FEE/OS HELP loan	1,051	49.6	1,156	52.4	1,122	55.0	970	56.3	1,010	54.3
Paid employment	1,180	55.7	1,176	53.4	1,140	55.9	1,019	59.2	1,085	58.3
Personal Loan	323	15.2	304	13.8	245	12.0	131	7.6	103	5.5
Savings/Trust fund	426	20.1	385	17.4	373	18.3	277	16.0	316	16.9
Scholarship	612	28.9	578	26.2	502	24.6	502	29.1	437	23.4

Note: Participants can select more than one option

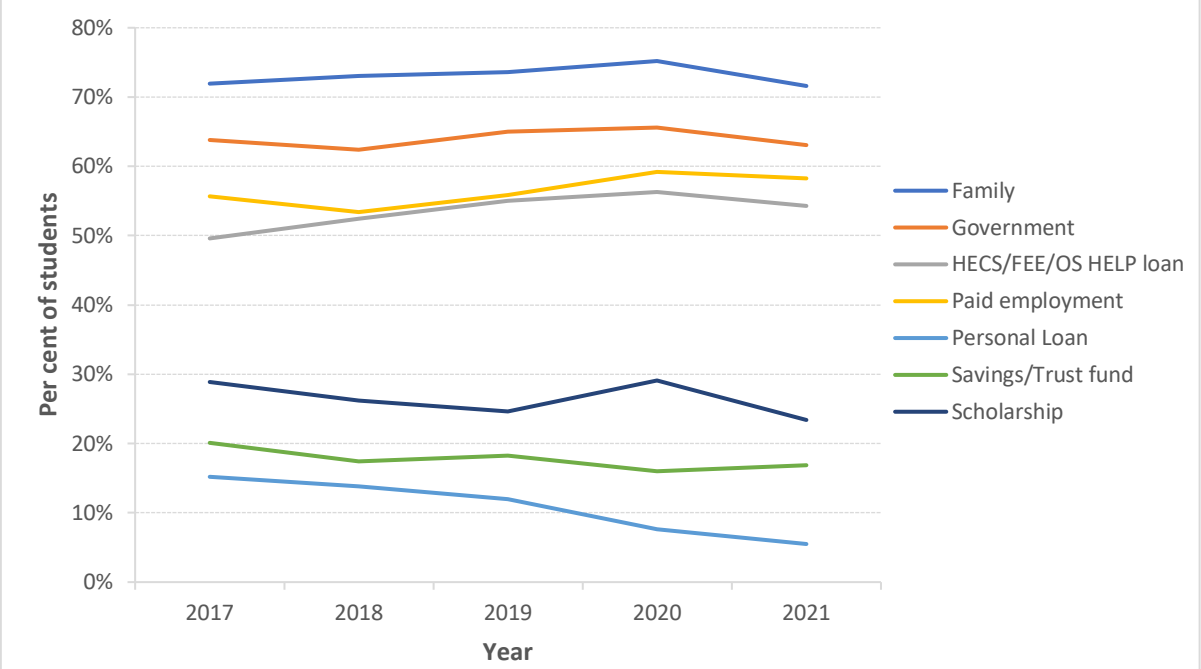


Figure 1. Sources of income for education and/or living expenses for entire medical degree

[2] Previous MSOD National Data Reports can be accessed at the Medical Deans website https://medicaldeans.org.au/data/medical-schools-outcomes-database-reports/

Rural background

Just over 25 per cent of the domestic 2021 MSOD respondents considered themselves as coming from a rural background (Table 14), and just over 10 per cent of international respondents. Of those respondents who finished their final year of secondary schooling in Australia, slightly fewer domestic and more international students did so in a regional area. For both these indicators, the numbers have remained fairly consistent during this 5 year period, although both figures have increased from around 20 per cent in 2014.

Table 14. Respondent considers themselves to come from a rural background

Rural background	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Domestic										
Yes	465	25.7	467	24.7	446	25.4	409	27.7	402	25.2
No	1,343	74.3	1,420	75.3	1,311	74.6	1,065	72.3	1,191	74.8
Total	**1,808**	**100.0**	**1,887**	**100.0**	**1,757**	**100.0**	**1,474**	**100.0**	**1,593**	**100.0**
International										
Yes	36	11.7	22	7.0	17	6.1	17	6.9	28	10.5
No	271	88.3	293	93.0	263	93.9	230	93.1	239	89.5
Total	**307**	**100.0**	**315**	**100.0**	**280**	**100.0**	**247**	**100.0**	**267**	**100.0**
All Students										
Yes	501	23.7	489	22.2	463	22.7	426	24.8	430	23.1
No	1,614	76.3	1,713	77.8	1,574	77.3	1,295	75.2	1,430	76.9
Total	**2,115**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Table 15. Final year of secondary schooling in a regional area

Final year of school in a regional area	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Domestic										
Yes	446	24.9	422	23.6	382	22.6	347	24.2	358	23.2
No	1,347	75.1	1,366	76.4	1,308	77.4	1,084	75.8	1,186	76.8
Total	**1,793**	**100.0**	**1,788**	**100.0**	**1,690**	**100.0**	**1,431**	**100.0**	**1,544**	**100.0**
International										
Yes	31	11.1	20	22.5	16	25.0	9	16.4	13	17.3
No	249	88.9	69	77.5	48	75.0	46	83.6	62	82.7
Total	**280**	**100.0**	**89**	**100.0**	**64**	**100.0**	**55**	**100.0**	**75**	**100.0**
All Students										
Yes	477	23.0	442	23.5	398	22.7	356	24.0	371	22.9
No	1,596	77.0	1,435	76.5	1,356	77.3	1,130	76.0	1,248	77.1
Total	**2,073**	**100.0**	**1,877**	**100.0**	**1,754**	**100.0**	**1,486**	**100.0**	**1,619**	**100.0**

Type of longest prior residential location

The MSOD survey asks participants about the type of location they have lived in the longest if they had lived in Australia for more than 1 year prior to commencing medical school.

Table 16 shows that 69 per cent of those responding lived the longest in a capital city (noting that the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's published population data as at 30 June 2020 is that 72 per cent of the population were living in major cities [3]). The proportion of students from smaller towns dropped slightly, and very slightly for small communities.

Table 16. Location where students have lived the longest (for domestic students living in Australia for more than 1 year prior to medical school)

Location of longest residence [4]	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Capital city	1,483	70.5	1,549	70.7	1,422	69.9	1,206	70.3	1,277	68.7
Major urban centre	223	10.6	222	10.1	240	11.8	159	9.3	210	11.3
Regional city or large town	161	7.7	178	8.1	181	8.9	135	7.9	160	8.6
Smaller town	112	5.3	113	5.2	83	4.1	98	5.7	88	4.7
Small community	124	5.9	128	5.8	109	5.4	118	6.9	124	6.7
Total	**2,103**	**100.0**	**2,190**	**100.0**	**2,035**	**100.0**	**1,716**	**100.0**	**1,859**	**100.0**

3. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Profile of Australia's population, released 16/09/2021, viewed 31/05/2022 https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-welfare/profile-of-australias-population

4. Classification: Major urban centre (>100,000 population size) e.g. Cairns, Geelong, Gold Coast/Tweed Heads, Gosford, Newcastle, Townsville, Wollongong, Wyong; Regional city or large town (25,000 - 99,999 population size) e.g. Alice Springs, Ballarat, Bunbury, Dubbo, Launceston, Mount Gambier; Smaller town (10,000 – 24,999 population size); Small community (<10,000 population size)

SECTION 3: PREVIOUS EDUCATION

Level of previous degree

The numbers of final year students who have completed a degree, diploma, or certificate prior to undertaking their medical studies has remained very stable over this period.

Table 17. Highest level of previous degree

Level of previous degree	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Postgraduate degree	133	6.3	156	7.1	125	6.1	100	5.8	121	6.5
Graduate diploma or graduate certificate level	52	2.5	56	2.5	42	2.1	40	2.3	48	2.6
Bachelor degree (honours)	294	13.9	317	14.4	312	15.3	230	13.4	254	13.7
Bachelor degree	869	41.1	895	40.6	800	39.3	679	39.5	715	38.4
Diploma	25	1.2	23	1.0	13	0.6	17	1.0	20	1.1
Certificate	43	2.0	29	1.3	27	1.3	34	2.0	33	1.8
N/A - no prior tertiary qualifications	700	33.1	726	33.0	718	35.2	621	36.1	669	36.0
Total	**2,116**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Discipline of previous degree

Nearly half of all respondents who had completed a previous degree had done so in Natural and Physical Sciences, whilst just under 45 per cent had completed a degree in a health-related discipline. Medical studies (20 per cent), Pharmacy (4 per cent), Public Health (4 per cent) and Rehabilitation Therapies (3 per cent) were the most common health-specific degrees completed.

Table 18. Discipline of highest previous degree

Discipline of highest previous degree	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Natural and Physical Sciences	689	49.6	758	52.2	694	53.4	602	56.0	559	48.0
Information Technology	12	0.8	9	0.6	8	0.6	5	0.4	10	0.8
Engineering and Related Technologies	43	3.0	35	2.4	49	3.7	31	2.8	32	2.7
Architecture and Building	2	0.1	2	0.1	1	0.0	2	0.1	1	0.0
Agriculture, Environmental & Related Studies	5	0.3	8	0.5	4	0.3	5	0.4	6	0.5
Health Total	557	40.1	573	39.4	491	37.7	355	33.0	518	44.5
-- Medical studies	240	17.2	240	16.5	210	16.1	161	14.9	237	20.3
-- Complementary Therapies	6	0.4	0	.	2	0.1	0	.	2	0.1
-- Dental Studies	4	0.2	13	0.8	8	0.6	2	0.1	2	0.1
-- Nursing / Midwifery	33	2.3	38	2.6	30	2.3	23	2.1	32	2.7
-- Optical Science	9	0.6	6	0.4	1	0.0	6	0.5	6	0.5
-- Pharmacy	62	4.4	65	4.4	47	3.6	29	2.6	51	4.3
-- Rehabilitation Therapies	59	4.2	57	3.9	50	3.8	41	3.8	37	3.1
-- Radiography	17	1.2	20	1.3	18	1.3	10	0.9	10	0.8
-- Public Health	44	3.1	37	2.5	41	3.1	40	3.7	45	3.8
-- Veterinary Studies	7	0.5	10	0.6	4	0.3	3	0.2	6	0.5
-- Other Health	61	4.3	64	4.4	63	4.8	41	3.8	77	6.6
Education	17	1.2	17	1.1	14	1.0	13	1.2	11	0.9
Management and Commerce	69	4.9	47	3.2	39	3.0	31	2.8	38	3.2
Society and Culture	112	8.0	110	7.5	96	7.3	99	9.2	86	7.3
Creative Arts	39	2.8	34	2.3	33	2.5	35	3.2	31	2.6
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	6	0.4	7	0.4	7	0.5	9	0.8	4	0.3
Mixed Field Programmes	14	1.0	17	1.1	9	0.6	19	1.7	13	1.1

Notes:

1. Due to the structure of the question, 'Health Total' includes those who ticked a row titled 'Health, please specify' and did not specify an area as well as those who specified at least one health area.
2. Participants can select more than one option.

Satisfaction with medical program

Final year students were asked about their level of satisfaction with the medical program at their university (Table 19) on a Likert scale of 1 to 5.

Seventy-six per cent of respondents indicated they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their medical program in 2021, very close to last year's figure. The proportion of respondents "dissatisfied" or "highly dissatisfied" dropped slightly. The average level of satisfaction for the 2021 cohort remained at 3.9 while the median level of satisfaction was also unchanged at 4 (satisfied).

The level of domestic students "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their medical program in 2021 was slightly higher than the consolidated figure for all students.

Table 19. Overall level of satisfaction with medical program

Satisfaction	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Domestic Students					
Average satisfaction	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.9
Median satisfaction	4	4	4	4	4
Per cent satisfied or very satisfied	77.7	76.8	72.6	77.1	77.8
Per cent unsatisfied or very unsatisfied	9.5	10.7	12.5	10.1	9.6
International Students					
Average satisfaction	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.7	3.6
Median satisfaction	4	4	4	4	4
Per cent satisfied or very satisfied	71.3	68.6	62.5	72.1	67.4
Per cent unsatisfied or very unsatisfied	12.1	11.4	17.1	12.6	12.7
All Students					
Average satisfaction	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.9	3.9
Median satisfaction	4	4	4	4	4
Per cent satisfied or very satisfied	76.8	75.6	71.2	76.4	76.3
Per cent unsatisfied or very unsatisfied	9.8	10.8	13.2	10.5	10.1

Note: Scale: 1 = Very dissatisfied, 2 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 4 = Satisfied, 5 = Very satisfied

Preparation for internship

Seventy-nine per cent of respondents in 2021 “Agreed” or “Strongly Agreed” that their basic medical degree was preparing them well to work as an intern – the largest proportion within this 5 year reporting range. Just under 6 per cent of the cohort said they “Disagreed” or “Strongly Disagreed” with this statement – the smallest proportion during this period. The average agreement remained at 4.0, with the median agreement also remaining consistent at 4.

The level of domestic students who “Agreed” or “Strongly Agreed” with the statement was slightly higher than the consolidated figure for all students.

Whilst the proportion of International students who “Agreed” or “Strongly Agreed” was lower at 72 per cent, this number is the highest in this reporting period. The proportion disagreeing or strongly disagreeing was slightly higher this year at 6 per cent.

Table 20. Overall level of agreement with the statement
'My Basic Medical Degree is preparing me well to work as an intern'

Agreement	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Domestic Students					
Average agreement	3.9	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.0
Median agreement	4	4	4	4	4
Per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing	76.3	74.1	72.0	78.0	79.7
Per cent disagreeing or strongly disagreeing	6.6	7.9	9.3	6.6	5.8
International Students					
Average agreement	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.8
Median agreement	4	4	4	4	4
Per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing	66.1	66.7	61.4	71.3	71.9
Per cent disagreeing or strongly disagreeing	8.1	9.2	14.6	5.3	6.0
All Students					
Average agreement	3.8	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.0
Median agreement	4	4	4	4	4
Per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing	74.8	73.1	70.5	77.0	78.5
Per cent disagreeing or strongly disagreeing	6.8	8.1	10.1	6.4	5.8

Note: Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Rural club membership

As part of the medical school experience, students have the opportunity to join rural clubs – student-led groups and networks that promote and develop initiatives on rural and remote health practice.

In 2021, 25 per cent of respondents indicated that they were a member of a rural club. This number has shown a slow but steady drop over the last few years (after a high of 41 per cent seen in 2015).

Domestic students were significantly more likely to be in a rural club than international students; 28 per cent vs 9 per cent. The proportions for international students have declined over the years, however the change in overall numbers is primarily due to the falling domestic student membership.

The majority of rural club members (around 60 per cent) are not from rural backgrounds. Of those students who did consider themselves from a rural background 43 per cent were involved with rural clubs (lower than last year when the number was 49 per cent).

Using a binary logistic regression analysis, 2021 data showed that respondents who reported being members of rural clubs were 4.4 times more likely to express a preference to practice outside capital cities than those who were not members (OR 4.4 95%CI 3.5-5.5 p<0.001). This has increased from 3.6 times more likely the previous year.

Table 21. Respondent is a member of a rural club

Rural club membership	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Domestic Students										
Yes	763	42.2	676	35.8	582	33.1	473	32.1	447	28.1
No	1,046	57.8	1,211	64.2	1,175	66.9	1,001	67.9	1,146	71.9
Total	**1,809**	**100.0**	**1,887**	**100.0**	**1,757**	**100.0**	**1,474**	**100.0**	**1,593**	**100.0**
International Students										
Yes	51	16.6	38	12.1	27	9.6	29	11.7	24	9.0
No	256	83.4	277	87.9	253	90.4	218	88.3	243	91.0
Total	**307**	**100.0**	**315**	**100.0**	**280**	**100.0**	**247**	**100.0**	**267**	**100.0**
All Students										
Yes	814	38.5	714	32.4	609	29.9	502	29.2	471	25.3
No	1,302	61.5	1,488	67.6	1,428	70.1	1,219	70.8	1,389	74.7
Total	**2,116**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

SECTION 5: CAREER INTENTION

Preferred country for future practice

The majority (97 per cent) of 2021 respondents indicated Australia as their preferred country for future practice. This figure has shown a slight increase over time, with 2017 having the lowest percentage in this reporting period. The number indicating a preference to work in New Zealand continues to be low. The proportion of international students wishing to stay and work in Australia increased to its highest level in this reporting period.

Table 22. Preferred country for future practice

Preferred country for future practice	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Domestic Students										
Australia	1,778	98.3	1,853	98.2	1,740	99.0	1,466	99.5	1,581	99.2
New Zealand	13	0.7	10	0.5	4	0.2	4	0.3	7	0.4
Other	18	1.0	24	1.3	13	0.7	4	0.3	5	0.3
Total	**1,809**	**100.0**	**1,887**	**100.0**	**1,757**	**100.0**	**1,474**	**100.0**	**1,593**	**100.0**
International Students										
Australia	213	69.4	236	74.9	226	80.7	186	75.3	229	85.8
New Zealand	.	.	4	1.3	1	0.4	1	0.4	.	.
Other	94	30.6	75	23.8	53	18.9	60	24.3	38	14.2
Total	**307**	**100.0**	**315**	**100.0**	**280**	**100.0**	**247**	**100.0**	**267**	**100.0**
All Students										
Australia	1,991	94.1	2,089	94.9	1,966	96.5	1,652	96.0	1,810	97.3
New Zealand	13	0.6	14	0.6	5	0.2	5	0.3	7	0.4
Other	112	5.3	99	4.5	66	3.2	64	3.7	43	2.3
Total	**2,116**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Preferred state for future practice

Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland continued to be the 3 most preferred states for final year students when considering the location of their intended future practice. WA continues to see an increase. The proportion choosing SA has fallen.

Note: These figures will be impacted by the variation in schools' response rates (see Table 6), in particular the high response from Victorian students and low response from SA students.

Table 23. Career intention: first preference of state for future practice

First preference state/territory for future practice	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Domestic Students										
ACT	25	1.4	41	2.2	36	2.0	19	1.3	30	1.9
NSW	514	28.4	518	27.5	540	30.7	369	25.0	388	24.4
NT	28	1.5	23	1.2	22	1.3	11	0.7	28	1.8
QLD	395	21.8	381	20.2	319	18.2	215	14.6	337	21.2
SA	98	5.4	77	4.1	70	4.0	79	5.4	38	2.4
TAS	54	3.0	58	3.1	41	2.3	47	3.2	61	3.8
VIC	543	30.0	602	31.9	528	30.1	547	37.1	496	31.1
WA	121	6.7	153	8.1	184	10.5	179	12.1	203	12.7
Country other than Australia	31	1.7	34	1.8	17	1.0	8	0.5	12	0.8
Total	**1,809**	**100.0**	**1,887**	**100.0**	**1,757**	**100.0**	**1,474**	**100.0**	**1,593**	**100.0**
International Students										
ACT	6	2.0	3	1.0	6	2.1	6	2.4	8	3.0
NSW	68	22.1	65	20.6	72	25.7	54	21.9	56	21.0
NT	1	0.3	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.4
QLD	56	18.2	56	17.8	46	16.4	46	18.6	51	19.1
SA	3	1.0	15	4.8	6	2.1	6	2.4	3	1.1
TAS	14	4.6	7	2.2	10	3.6	9	3.6	8	3.0
VIC	62	20.2	75	23.8	67	23.9	50	20.2	89	33.3
WA	3	1.0	15	4.8	19	6.8	15	6.1	13	4.9
Country other than Australia	94	30.6	79	25.1	54	19.3	61	24.7	38	14.2
Total	**307**	**100.0**	**315**	**100.0**	**280**	**100.0**	**247**	**100.0**	**267**	**100.0**
All Students										
ACT	31	1.5	44	2.0	42	2.1	25	1.5	38	2.0
NSW	582	27.5	583	26.5	612	30.0	423	24.6	444	23.9
NT	29	1.4	23	1.0	22	1.1	11	0.6	29	1.6
QLD	451	21.3	437	19.8	365	17.9	261	15.2	388	20.9
SA	101	4.8	92	4.2	76	3.7	85	4.9	41	2.2
TAS	68	3.2	65	3.0	51	2.5	56	3.3	69	3.7
VIC	605	28.6	677	30.7	595	29.2	597	34.7	585	31.5
WA	124	5.9	168	7.6	203	10.0	194	11.3	216	11.6
Country other than Australia	125	5.9	113	5.1	71	3.5	69	4.0	50	2.7
Total	**2,116**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Note: The varying response rates from students at medical schools in each state/territory will affect these figures

Preferred location for future practice

Of those wishing for a future career working in Australia, the percentage expressing a preference to work outside of capital cities has increased to just under 39 per cent, the highest since the MSOD was started. There has been a small increase since last year in the preference to work in major urban centres and regional cites/towns, and a small increase in those wanting to work in small communities.

Overall, just under 20 per cent stated a preference to work in regional areas, smaller towns or small communities, with higher proportions for these preferences for domestic students than international.

Table 24. Career intention: preference of location for future practice (for students preferring to practice in Australia)

First preference region of future practice	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Domestic Students										
Capital city	1,154	64.0	1,197	63.8	1,143	65.1	966	65.6	959	60.3
Major urban centre	304	16.9	326	17.4	324	18.5	241	16.4	311	19.5
Regional city / large town	235	13.0	250	13.3	202	11.5	179	12.2	217	13.6
Smaller town	78	4.3	79	4.2	61	3.5	64	4.3	71	4.5
Small community	31	1.7	24	1.3	25	1.4	23	1.6	33	2.1
Total	**1,802**	**100.0**	**1,876**	**100.0**	**1,755**	**100.0**	**1,473**	**100.0**	**1,591**	**100.0**
International Students										
Capital city	170	65.6	180	66.4	178	69.0	147	65.9	165	66.5
Major urban centre	53	20.5	53	19.6	49	19.0	47	21.1	48	19.4
Regional city / large town	25	9.7	25	9.2	26	10.1	23	10.3	27	10.9
Smaller town	8	3.1	8	3.0	4	1.6	5	2.2	6	2.4
Small community	3	1.2	5	1.8	1	0.4	1	0.4	2	0.8
Total	**259**	**100.0**	**271**	**100.0**	**258**	**100.0**	**223**	**100.0**	**248**	**100.0**
All Students										
Capital city	1,324	64.2	1,377	64.1	1,321	65.6	1,113	65.6	1,124	61.1
Major urban centre	357	17.3	379	17.7	373	18.5	288	17.0	359	19.5
Regional city / large town	260	12.6	275	12.8	228	11.3	202	11.9	244	13.3
Smaller town	86	4.2	87	4.1	65	3.2	69	4.1	77	4.2
Small community	34	1.6	29	1.4	26	1.3	24	1.4	35	1.9
Total	**2,061**	**100.0**	**2,147**	**100.0**	**2,013**	**100.0**	**1,696**	**100.0**	**1,839**	**100.0**

Note: **Major urban centre** (>100,000 population size) e.g., Cairns, Geelong, Gold Coast/Tweed Heads, Gosford, Newcastle, Townsville, Wollongong, Wyong. **Regional city or large town** (25,000 - 99,999 population size) e.g., Alice Springs, Ballarat, Bunbury, Dubbo, Launceston, Mount Gambier. **Smaller town** (10,000 – 24,999 population size). **Small community** (<10,000 population size).

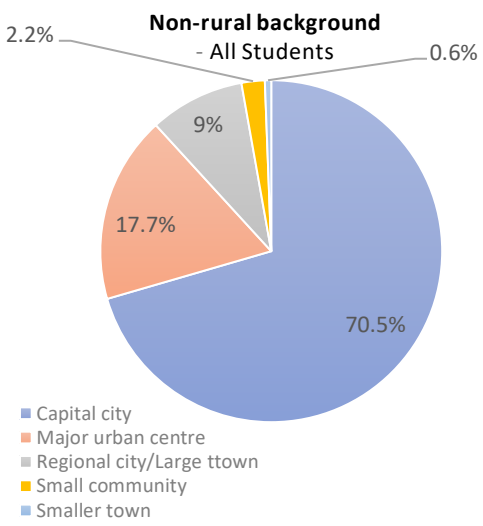
Preferred location for future practice – by rural background

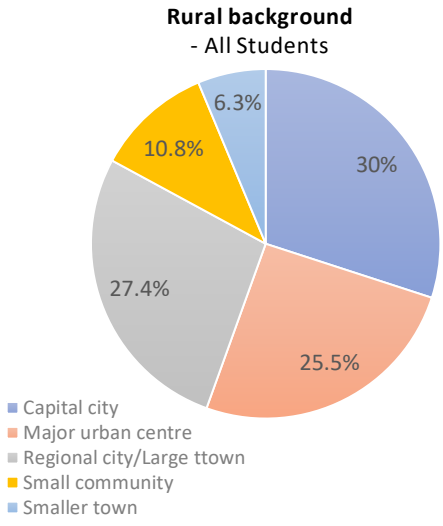
Of those respondents from a rural background, a greater proportion of domestic students want to work in regional and rural Australia than international students. Over 70 per cent of domestic rural students express a preference to work outside a capital city, with 18 per cent wanting to work in a smaller town or small community. For international students the corresponding figures are just under 60 per cent and 7 per cent.

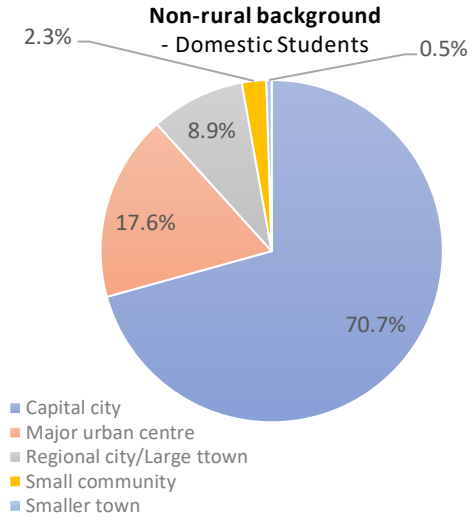
The 2021 survey showed a notable change from previous years in the preferences of international students from a rural background, with more wishing to work in a capital city and fewer in regional centres, smaller towns, or small communities.

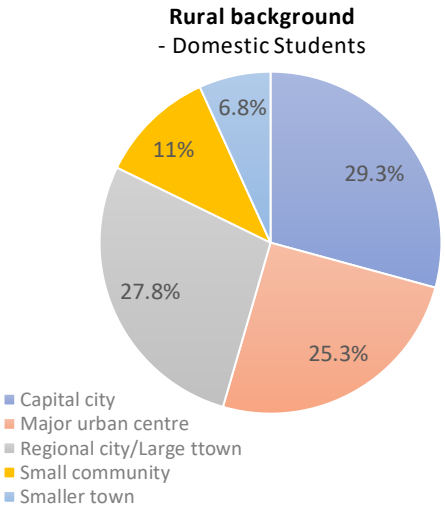
Table 25. Preferred location of future practice – by rural background (percentage of those wishing to work in Australia)

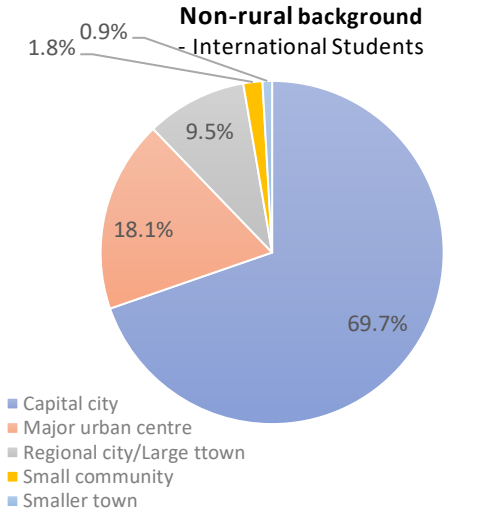
Preference for location of future practice (%)	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Non-rural	Rural	Non-rural	Rural	Non-rural	Rural	Non-rural	Rural	Non-rural	Rural
Domestic Students										
Capital city	74.2	34.6	74.5	31.3	74.0	39.0	77.9	33.5	70.7	29.3
Major urban centre	15.4	21.2	16.0	21.5	17.0	22.6	13.9	22.7	17.6	25.3
Regional city / large town	8.1	27.4	7.1	32.2	6.6	25.8	6.4	27.1	8.9	27.8
Smaller town	1.6	12.1	2.1	10.5	1.9	8.1	0.9	13.2	2.3	11.0
Small community	0.7	4.8	0.2	4.5	0.4	4.5	0.8	3.4	0.5	6.8
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
International Students										
Capital city	69.6	37.5	68.8	38.1	70.7	43.8	69.4	23.5	69.7	40.7
Major urban centre	18.9	31.3	19.6	19.0	18.6	25.0	20.4	29.4	18.1	29.6
Regional city / large town	7.9	21.9	7.6	28.6	8.7	31.3	8.7	29.4	9.5	22.2
Smaller town	2.2	9.4	3.2	0.0	1.7	0.0	1.5	11.8	1.8	7.4
Small community	1.3	0.0	0.8	14.3	0.4	0.0	0.0	5.9	0.9	0.0
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
All Students										
Capital city	73.6	34.7	73.7	31.6	73.5	39.2	76.5	33.1	70.5	30.0
Major urban centre	15.9	21.8	16.6	21.4	17.3	22.7	15.0	23.0	17.7	25.5
Regional city / large town	8.0	27.1	7.2	32.0	7.0	26.0	6.8	27.2	9.0	27.4
Smaller town	1.7	11.9	2.3	10.1	1.9	7.8	1.0	13.1	2.2	10.8
Small community	0.8	4.4	0.3	4.9	0.4	4.3	0.7	3.5	0.6	6.3
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**











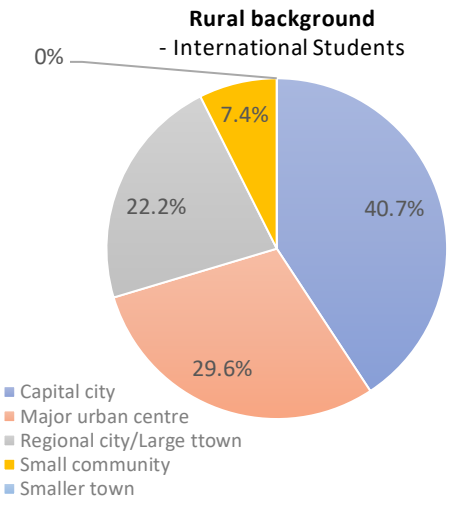


Figure 2. Preferred location for future practice: students from a rural vs non-rural background (wishing to practice in Australia)

Interests for future practice – teaching

A substantial majority of final year medical students were interested in teaching as part of their future medical career, with this number remaining consistently high at around 86 per cent. A very low proportion of respondents indicated no interest in teaching, with a consistent 10 to 11 per cent undecided.

Table 26. Interest in teaching as part of medical career

Interest in teaching	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Domestic										
Yes	1,559	86.2	1,627	86.2	1,524	86.7	1,279	86.8	1,378	86.5
No	58	3.2	62	3.3	48	2.7	38	2.6	54	3.4
Undecided	192	10.6	198	10.5	185	10.5	157	10.7	161	10.1
Total	**1,809**	**100.0**	**1,887**	**100.0**	**1,757**	**100.0**	**1,474**	**100.0**	**1,593**	**100.0**
International										
Yes	253	82.4	253	80.3	232	82.9	204	82.6	221	82.8
No	8	2.6	17	5.4	9	3.2	9	3.6	10	3.7
Undecided	46	15.0	45	14.3	39	13.9	34	13.8	36	13.5
Total	**307**	**100.0**	**315**	**100.0**	**280**	**100.0**	**247**	**100.0**	**267**	**100.0**
All Students										
Yes	1,812	85.6	1,880	85.4	1,756	86.2	1,483	86.2	1,599	86.0
No	66	3.1	79	3.6	57	2.8	47	2.7	64	3.4
Undecided	238	11.2	243	11.0	224	11.0	191	11.1	197	10.6
Total	**2,116**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Interests for future practice – research

Fifty-nine per cent of respondents in 2021 were interested in research as part of their future medical career. While this is slightly lower than previous years, these numbers have remained very stable over time.

Table 27. Interest in research as part of medical career

Interest in research	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Domestic										
Yes	1,133	62.6	1,211	64.2	1,112	63.3	907	61.5	936	58.8
No	244	13.5	285	15.1	282	16.1	261	17.7	310	19.5
Undecided	432	23.9	391	20.7	363	20.7	306	20.8	347	21.8
Total	**1,809**	**100.0**	**1,887**	**100.0**	**1,757**	**100.0**	**1,474**	**100.0**	**1,593**	**100.0**
International										
Yes	191	62.2	206	65.4	169	60.4	149	60.3	169	63.3
No	46	15.0	55	17.5	50	17.9	38	15.4	37	13.9
Undecided	70	22.8	54	17.1	61	21.8	60	24.3	61	22.8
Total	**307**	**100.0**	**315**	**100.0**	**280**	**100.0**	**247**	**100.0**	**267**	**100.0**
All Students										
Yes	1,324	62.6	1,417	64.4	1,281	62.9	1,056	61.4	1,105	59.4
No	290	13.7	340	15.4	332	16.3	299	17.4	347	18.7
Undecided	502	23.7	445	20.2	424	20.8	366	21.3	408	21.9
Total	**2,116**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

Interests for future practice – Indigenous health

Just over half of respondents to the 2021 survey were interested in Indigenous health being a part of their future career, with a marked difference in the responses from domestic and international students. This number continues to grow and is the highest percentage across the reported period.

Table 28. Interest in Indigenous health as part of medical career

Interest in Indigenous health	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Domestic Students										
Yes	813	44.9	859	45.5	880	50.1	776	52.6	864	54.2
No	379	21.0	401	21.3	323	18.4	220	14.9	279	17.5
Undecided	617	34.1	627	33.2	554	31.5	478	32.4	450	28.2
Total	**1,809**	**100.0**	**1,887**	**100.0**	**1,757**	**100.0**	**1,474**	**100.0**	**1,593**	**100.0**
International Students										
Yes	104	33.9	104	33.0	71	25.4	75	30.4	81	30.3
No	85	27.7	99	31.4	92	32.9	76	30.8	75	28.1
Undecided	118	38.4	112	35.6	117	41.8	96	38.9	111	41.6
Total	**307**	**100.0**	**315**	**100.0**	**280**	**100.0**	**247**	**100.0**	**267**	**100.0**
All Students										
Yes	917	43.3	963	43.7	951	46.7	851	49.4	945	50.8
No	464	21.9	500	22.7	415	20.4	296	17.2	354	19.0
Undecided	735	34.7	739	33.6	671	32.9	574	33.4	561	30.2
Total	**2,116**	**100.0**	**2,202**	**100.0**	**2,037**	**100.0**	**1,721**	**100.0**	**1,860**	**100.0**

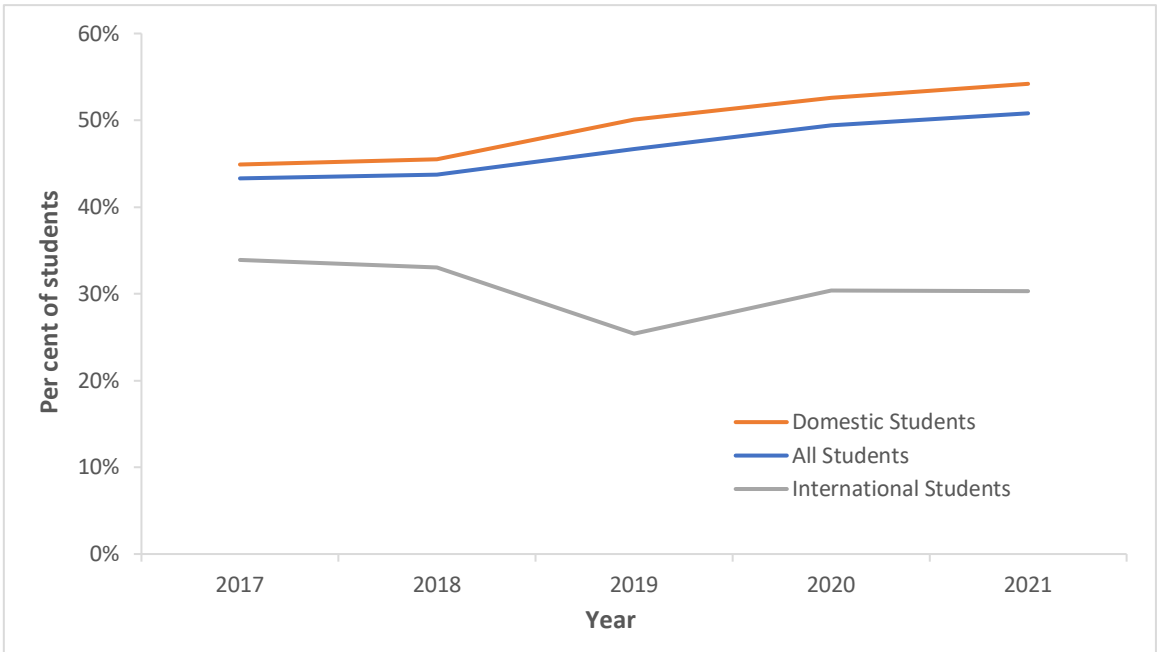


Figure 3. Interest in Indigenous health as part of medical career

Respondents from a rural background were more likely to express interest in Indigenous health than those from a non-rural background. This has been a consistent difference over the years.

Table 29. Interest in Indigenous health by rural background (percentages)

Interest in Indigenous health	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Non-rural	Rural	Non-rural	Rural	Non-rural	Rural	Non-rural	Rural	Non-rural	Rural
Yes	41.1	50.7	39.8	57.5	44.0	55.9	45.9	60.1	47.0	63.5
No	23.3	17.6	25.0	14.7	21.6	16.2	18.9	12.0	20.8	13.3
Undecided	35.6	31.7	35.2	27.8	34.4	27.9	35.1	27.9	32.2	23.3
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

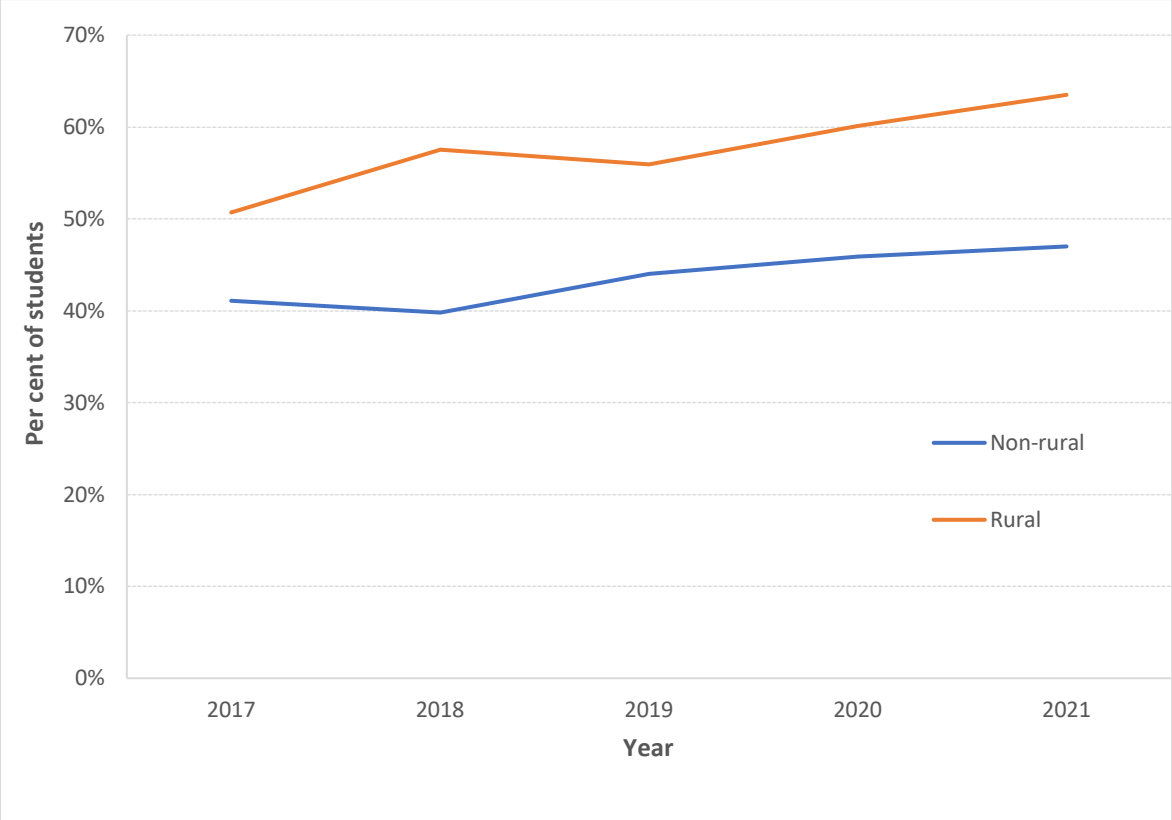


Figure 4. Interest in Indigenous health by rural background

Preferred specialty of future practice

"Adult Medicine/ Internal Medicine/ Physician" continues to be the most preferred specialty of future practice for final year students (Table 30), at 19 per cent. General Practice remains second most preferred, but has fallen over 2 percentage points to 13.8. Surgery remains third with a very similar proportion to last year, at 13.3.

These 3 disciplines have remained the most commonly preferred specialties of future practice since 2014, with Paediatrics and Child Health, Anaesthesia, Emergency Medicine, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, and Psychiatry remaining the same top 8.

2021 was the first survey that included Rural Generalist as an option, and this joined the list as the 9th most preferred specialty. As Rural Generalist is a practitioner within the formal General Practice specialty, it is interesting to note that combining these two preferences gives a percentage of 18.6 respondents choosing this as their preferred specialty. For Domestic students, combining these two General Practice options means this becomes the most preferred choice, with a percentage of 19.8.

The levels of interest in the other specialties remains fairly stable, with a slight drop in the interest in Dermatology, Pathology and Public Health.

For International students, this year Surgery moved from being ranked 3rd to be the most preferred specialty, with General Practice dropping to 5th with 9.7 per cent. Including those who selected Rural Generalist increases the percentage for this choice to 11.2 per cent and moves it above anaesthesia to be in 4th position.

Table 30. First preference of specialty for future practice – All students

First preference specialty of future practice	2017			2018			2019			2020			2021		
	n	%	Rank	*n*	%	Rank	*n*	%	Rank	*n*	%	Rank	*n*	%	Rank
Adult Medicine/ Internal Medicine/ Physician	385	18.5	1	415	19.1	1	386	20.0	1	323	19.8	1	350	19.2	1
General Practice	343	16.5	2	332	15.3	3	294	15.2	2	262	16.1	2	252	13.8	2
Surgery	312	15.0	3	335	15.5	2	267	13.8	3	213	13.1	3	242	13.3	3
Anaesthesia	226	10.9	4	198	9.1	5	214	11.1	4	160	9.8	4	185	10.2	4
Emergency Medicine	179	8.6	6	174	8.0	6	157	8.1	6	144	8.8	5	145	8.0	5
Paediatrics and Child Health	187	9.0	5	204	9.4	4	171	8.8	5	127	7.8	6	140	7.7	6
Obstetrics and Gynaecology	135	6.5	7	155	7.1	7	121	6.3	7	107	6.6	7	104	5.7	7
Psychiatry	83	4.0	8	96	4.4	8	94	4.9	8	104	6.4	8	104	5.7	8
Rural Generalist	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	86	4.7	9
Intensive Care Medicine	54	2.6	9	71	3.3	9	65	3.4	9	41	2.5	9	53	2.9	10
Radiology	42	2.0	11	36	1.7	11	29	1.5	12	36	2.2	10	43	2.4	11
Ophthalmology	43	2.1	10	49	2.3	10	30	1.6	11	27	1.7	12	26	1.4	12
Palliative Medicine	11	0.5	13	16	0.7	13	17	0.9	13	9	0.6	15	21	1.2	13
Dermatology	25	1.2	12	21	1.0	12	38	2.0	10	34	2.1	11	20	1.1	14
Pathology	7	0.3	17	11	0.5	14	5	0.3	16	14	0.9	13	8	0.4	15
Radiation Oncology	6	0.3	18	10	0.5	16	5	0.3	17	3	0.2	19	8	0.4	16
Addiction Medicine	4	0.2	19	1	0.0	22	4	0.2	18	4	0.2	17	6	0.3	17
Medical Administration (eg managing a hospital)	3	0.1	20	3	0.1	21	5	0.3	15	3	0.2	18	5	0.3	18
Public Health Medicine	9	0.4	16	7	0.3	19	4	0.2	20	11	0.7	14	5	0.3	19
Sport and Exercise Medicine	11	0.5	14	11	0.5	15	16	0.8	14	5	0.3	16	5	0.3	20
Non-Specialist Hospital Practice	9	0.4	15	7	0.3	18	2	0.1	22	1	0.1	22	4	0.2	21
Rehabilitation Medicine	2	0.1	23	5	0.2	20	2	0.1	23	2	0.1	20	4	0.2	22
Sexual Health Medicine	3	0.1	21	9	0.4	17	4	0.2	21	2	0.1	21	3	0.2	23
Occupational and Environmental Medicine	0	0.0	24	1	0.0	23	0	0.0	24	0	0.0	23	1	0.1	24
Pain Medicine	2	0.1	22	1	0.0	24	4	0.2	19	0	0.0	24	1	0.1	25
Total	**2,081**	**100.0**	.	**2,168**	**100.0**	.	**1,934**	**100.0**	.	**1,632**	**100.0**	.	**1,821**	**100.0**	.

Table 31. First preference of specialty for future practice – Domestic students

First preference specialty of future practice	2017			2018			2019			2020			2021		
	n	%	Rank	*n*	%	Rank	*n*	%	Rank	*n*	%	Rank	*n*	%	Rank
Adult Medicine/ Internal Medicine/ Physician	328	18.4	1	346	18.6	1	319	19.1	1	257	18.4	1	304	19.4	1
General Practice	297	16.7	2	288	15.5	2	264	15.8	2	231	16.5	2	230	14.7	2
Surgery	258	14.5	3	277	14.9	3	232	13.9	3	184	13.2	3	193	12.3	3
Anaesthesia	205	11.5	4	176	9.5	5	193	11.6	4	146	10.4	4	160	10.2	4
Paediatrics and Child Health	153	8.6	5	184	9.9	4	152	9.1	5	112	8.0	6	126	8.1	5
Emergency Medicine	152	8.5	6	146	7.9	6	129	7.7	6	117	8.4	5	114	7.3	6
Psychiatry	72	4.0	8	81	4.4	8	82	4.9	8	93	6.6	8	92	5.9	7
Obstetrics and Gynaecology	120	6.7	7	138	7.4	7	108	6.5	7	94	6.7	7	91	5.8	8
Rural Generalist	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	79	5.1	9
Intensive Care Medicine	48	2.7	9	61	3.3	9	54	3.2	9	35	2.5	9	45	2.9	10
Radiology	37	2.1	10	29	1.6	11	22	1.3	12	31	2.2	10	33	2.1	11
Ophthalmology	33	1.9	11	42	2.3	10	28	1.7	11	24	1.7	12	25	1.6	12
Dermatology	22	1.2	12	18	1.0	12	32	1.9	10	30	2.1	11	17	1.1	13
Palliative Medicine	8	0.4	15	14	0.8	13	12	0.7	14	8	0.6	15	16	1.0	14
Radiation Oncology	4	0.2	19	7	0.4	18	4	0.2	17	3	0.2	18	8	0.5	15
Pathology	6	0.3	17	10	0.5	14	3	0.2	19	10	0.7	13	6	0.4	16
Addiction Medicine	4	0.2	18	1	0.1	22	4	0.2	16	4	0.3	17	5	0.3	17
Public Health Medicine	9	0.5	13	7	0.4	17	3	0.2	20	10	0.7	14	4	0.3	18
Sport and Exercise Medicine	9	0.5	14	10	0.5	15	14	0.8	13	5	0.4	16	4	0.3	19
Medical Administration (eg managing a hospital)	3	0.2	20	3	0.2	21	5	0.3	15	.	.	.	3	0.2	20
Sexual Health Medicine	3	0.2	21	9	0.5	16	4	0.2	18	2	0.1	20	3	0.2	21
Non-Specialist Hospital Practice	6	0.3	16	5	0.3	19	2	0.1	21	1	0.1	21	2	0.1	22
Occupational and Environmental Medicine	.	.	.	1	0.1	23	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.1	23
Pain Medicine	1	0.1	22	.	.	.	2	0.1	22	.	.	.	1	0.1	24
Rehabilitation Medicine	1	0.1	23	5	0.3	20	1	0.1	23	2	0.1	19	1	0.1	25
Total	**1,779**	**100.0**	.	**1,858**	**100.0**	.	**1,669**	**100.0**	.	**1,399**	**100.0**	.	**1,563**	**100.0**	.

Table 32. First preference of specialty for future practice – International students

First preference specialty of future practice	2017			2018			2019			2020			2021		
	n	%	Rank	*n*	%	Rank	*n*	%	Rank	*n*	%	Rank	*n*	%	Rank
Surgery	54	17.9	2	58	18.7	2	35	13.2	2	29	12.4	3	49	19.0	1
Adult Medicine/ Internal Medicine/ Physician	57	18.9	1	69	22.3	1	67	25.3	1	66	28.3	1	46	17.8	2
Emergency Medicine	27	8.9	5	28	9.0	4	28	10.6	4	27	11.6	4	31	12.0	3
Anaesthesia	21	7.0	6	22	7.1	5	21	7.9	5	14	6.0	6	25	9.7	4
General Practice	46	15.2	3	44	14.2	3	30	11.3	3	31	13.3	2	22	8.5	5
Paediatrics and Child Health	34	11.3	4	20	6.5	6	19	7.2	6	15	6.4	5	14	5.4	6
Obstetrics and Gynaecology	15	5.0	7	17	5.5	7	13	4.9	7	13	5.6	7	13	5.0	7
Psychiatry	11	3.6	8	15	4.8	8	12	4.5	8	11	4.7	8	12	4.7	8
Radiology	5	1.7	11	7	2.3	11	7	2.6	10	5	2.1	10	10	3.9	9
Intensive Care Medicine	6	2.0	10	10	3.2	9	11	4.2	9	6	2.6	9	8	3.1	10
Rural Generalist	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7	2.7	11
Palliative Medicine	3	1.0	14	2	0.6	15	5	1.9	12	1	0.4	15	5	1.9	12
Dermatology	3	1.0	12	3	1.0	12	6	2.3	11	4	1.7	11	3	1.2	13
Rehabilitation Medicine	1	0.3	19	.	.	.	1	0.4	19	.	.	.	3	1.2	14
Medical Administration (eg managing a hospital)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	1.3	13	2	0.8	15
Non-Specialist Hospital Practice	3	1.0	13	2	0.6	14	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	0.8	16
Pathology	1	0.3	18	1	0.3	17	2	0.8	15	4	1.7	12	2	0.8	17
Addiction Medicine	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.4	18
Ophthalmology	10	3.3	9	7	2.3	10	2	0.8	13	3	1.3	14	1	0.4	19
Public Health Medicine	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.4	17	1	0.4	16	1	0.4	20
Sport and Exercise Medicine	2	0.7	16	1	0.3	18	2	0.8	16	.	.	.	1	0.4	21
Occupational and Environmental Medicine	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Pain Medicine	1	0.3	17	1	0.3	16	2	0.8	14	.	.	.	.	.	.
Radiation Oncology	2	0.7	15	3	1.0	13	1	0.4	18	.	.	.	.	.	.
Sexual Health Medicine	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Total	**302**	**100.0**	.	**310**	**100.0**	.	**265**	**100.0**	.	**233**	**100.0**	.	**258**	**100.0**	.

Factors influencing specialty choice for future practice

Table 33 shows the score and rank of various factors that respondents say influenced their interest in their most preferred specialty. The students were asked to rank each factor from a scale of 1 – "Not at all" influential, to 5 – "A great deal" of influence.

The consistently highest ranked influencing factor across the previous 5 years was that of "Atmosphere/ work culture" and continues to score very highly at 4.17.

The least influential factors were "financial costs of medical school education and/or debt" (1.73) which is ranked the lowest, as it was last year, with the other factors relating to finance (such as litigation/insurance costs, and costs of vocational training) also continuing to rank low.

Overall, there continues to be very little change in the ranking of these factors.

Table 33. Factors influencing choice of most preferred area of medicine

Factors influencing choice of most preferred area of medicine	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Atmosphere/work culture typical of the discipline	4.14	1	4.12	1	4.15	1	4.16	2	4.17	1
Alignment with personal values	4.09	2	4.11	2	4.13	2	4.17	1	4.15	2
Experience of specialty as a medical student	4.08	3	4.09	3	4.04	3	4.04	3	4.02	3
Intellectual content of the specialty	4.01	4	4.02	4	4.00	4	3.97	5	4.01	4
General medical school experiences	3.96	5	3.97	5	3.94	5	3.99	4	3.91	5
Influence of consultants/mentors	3.90	6	3.92	6	3.91	6	3.90	6	3.83	6
Self-appraisal of own skills/aptitudes	3.76	7	3.81	7	3.77	7	3.85	7	3.79	7
Perceived opportunity to work flexible hours	3.45	10	3.49	9	3.51	9	3.54	9	3.60	8
Opportunity for procedural work	3.71	8	3.70	8	3.70	8	3.58	8	3.58	9
Perceived amount of working hours	3.34	11	3.37	11	3.42	10	3.46	11	3.52	10
Type of patients typical of the discipline	3.47	9	3.48	10	3.39	11	3.47	10	3.49	11
Perceived job security	3.30	12	3.35	12	3.38	12	3.38	12	3.40	12
Perceived career advancement prospects	3.29	13	3.34	13	3.37	13	3.33	13	3.34	13
Self-appraisal of own domestic circumstances	3.19	15	3.23	15	3.24	15	3.32	14	3.30	14
Availability of a vocational training placement	3.20	14	3.25	14	3.27	14	3.25	15	3.21	15
Number of years required to complete training	2.87	18	2.94	18	2.97	18	3.04	16	3.03	16
Geographical location of most preferred specialty	2.98	17	2.97	17	3.00	16	2.93	18	3.01	17
Opportunity for research and /or teaching	3.00	16	3.04	16	2.97	17	2.99	17	2.98	18
Perceived financial prospects	2.52	19	2.59	19	2.60	19	2.55	19	2.55	19
Perceived prestige of the discipline	2.19	20	2.24	20	2.19	20	2.11	20	2.14	20
Risk of litigation and associated insurance costs	2.02	21	2.06	21	1.98	21	2.02	21	2.04	21
Influence of parents/relatives	1.85	22	1.92	22	1.85	22	1.82	22	1.83	22
Influence of partner's occupation	1.82	23	1.86	25	1.83	23	1.75	24	1.78	23
Financial costs of vocational training	1.81	25	1.87	23	1.79	24	1.77	23	1.75	24
Financial costs of medical school education and/or debt	1.81	24	1.86	24	1.78	25	1.74	25	1.74	25

Note: Scale (of influence): 1 = Not at all to 5 = A great deal

SECTION 6: INTERNSHIP

Accepted internships by state

Final year students were asked to indicate in which state or territory they had accepted an internship position. It should be noted that the time of year in which schools administer the survey would have a bearing on whether students had been offered an internship, as does the response rates from students across the different states/territories; thus, the responses presented in the table below do not reflect the final number of internship positions accepted for the 2021 cohort nor are they necessarily a representative sample.

Table 34. Internship acceptance by state/territory

Internship acceptance by state/territory	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
ACT	30	1.5	65	3.0	57	2.8	35	2.1	56	3.0
NSW	520	26.7	587	27.4	625	31.2	414	24.3	439	23.8
NT	26	1.3	19	0.9	23	1.1	15	0.9	27	1.5
QLD	461	23.7	466	21.7	404	20.2	294	17.3	398	21.5
SA	105	5.4	96	4.5	83	4.1	85	5.0	47	2.5
TAS	71	3.7	75	3.5	65	3.2	66	3.9	83	4.5
VIC	552	28.4	618	28.8	507	25.3	557	32.7	553	29.9
WA	125	6.4	177	8.3	204	10.2	194	11.4	219	11.9
Country other than Australia	54	2.8	41	1.9	36	1.8	43	2.5	26	1.4
Total	**1,944**	**100.0**	**2,144**	**100.0**	**2,004**	**100.0**	**1,703**	**100.0**	**1,848**	**100.0**