Attitudes towards education in Australia

ANU Centre for Social Research and Methods

Professor Nicholas Biddle

ANU Centre for Social Research and Methods

Australian National University

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to consider the views and attitudes towards education in Australia, how these attitudes vary across the population, and how they have changed over time. The paper uses data collected as part of the ANUpoll series of surveys, focusing on the April 2023 data collection. We also include data from surveys going back to 2008, as well as surveys undertaken during the COVID-19 pandemic. The April 2023 survey has information on 4,469 Australian adults from all states and territories and from a variety of demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Australians have very positive views towards education in Australia. Universities and schools were some of the more trusted institutions in Australia (well above governments and the public service) and most people thought that schools, TAFE colleges and universities were doing a good or excellent job. Australians also see a very strong role for schools and universities in society, particularly the core roles of training young Australians for the future workforce and ensuring young Australians have the essential skills in literacy and numeracy. Australians are less likely to say that public schools are doing a good or excellent job compared to other institutions, but 80.9 per cent of Australians say that public schools should receive more money, compared to 55.3 per cent of Australians thinking that private schools should receive less money.

Executive summary

- COVID-19 was a large short-term shock to education in Australia, impacting learning across early childhood, school, TAFE, and university. This is in addition to other ongoing trends and emerging issues that have added to the disruption experienced by the sector, including funding changes and challenges, staff shortages, continued inequities in access and attainment, and the emergence of advanced AI systems.
- In this paper we consider the views and attitudes towards education in Australia, how these attitudes vary across the population, and how they have changed over time.
- The paper uses data collected as part of the ANUpoll series of surveys, with this particular wave collected in April 2023 and exploring the opinion of almost four-and-a-half thousand Australian adults.

Confidence in education institutions

- Education institutions in Australia inspire a large degree of confidence amongst the general public, with only police having a greater level of confidence. There is slightly more confidence in universities compared to schools, with the latter having a similar level of confidence as hospitals and the health system.
- Confidence in education institutions has declined since the height of the pandemic. The drop in universities was modest – from 70.9 per cent having quite a lot or a great deal of confidence in November 2020 compared to 67.9 per cent in April 2023.
- Schools have lost a much greater level of confidence since the first year of the pandemic. In November 2020, 78.0 per cent of Australians had quite a lot or a great deal of confidence in schools. This declined to 63.2 per cent in April 2023.

Perceptions of benefits of and barriers to education

- There has been a slight decline in the per cent of Australians who thought university was necessary to be successful in today's work world – from 18.4 per cent in September 2008 to 14.2 per cent in April 2023
- There has been a decline over time in the per cent of Australians who thought that getting access to university had become harder. In September 2008, 61.9 per cent of Australians thought it had become harder in the preceding 10 years. In April 2023, this had fallen to 34.8 per cent
- Australians think that getting access to university had become easier for students from Indigenous backgrounds, overseas students, and students from non-English speaking backgrounds. They think things are about the same for full-fee paying students, but think it has become harder for students from remote and regional areas and students from poor families.

Education performance and funding

- Most Australians think that education institutions are doing a good or excellent job in their state/territory. However, there is variation across the type of institution with only a bare majority (54.6 per cent) thinking that public schools are doing a good or excellent job compared to almost three-quarters of Australians (73.7 per cent) thinking that private schools are. In between these two, 68.6 per cent of Australians think that TAFE colleges are doing a good or excellent job alongside 70.6 per cent who think that universities are.
- There have been declines in the proportion of people who think that private schools, TAFE colleges, and universities are doing a good or excellent job since 2008. However, there has been a small increase in support for public schools – from 48.9 per cent in September 2008 to 54.5 per cent in April 2023.
- Australians are more likely to think that students would do better at a private school compared to a public school. Australians are slightly more likely to think that a student from a

disadvantaged family would do better at a public school compared to those from an advantaged family.

- Most Australians (80.9 per cent) think that more money should be spent on public schools with only 1.4 per cent thinking that less should be spent. More than half of the Australian population (55.3 per cent) think that less money should be spent on private school, with less than one-in-ten (8.8 per cent) thinking that more should be spent.
- Most Australians also think that more should be spent on TAFE colleges (69.6 per cent). For universities, the most common response was to say that spending was about right at present (43.8 per cent). However, there were about four times as many respondents who thought more should be spent (45.4 per cent) compared to those who thought less should be spent (10.8 per cent).

Perceived role of education

- The role of the university with the greatest level of support was to 'Train young Australians for the future workforce.' This was true in all three waves of data collection we asked the question (pre-COVID, during-COVID, and post-COVID). However, there was a drop in support between November 2020 to April 2023 (from 62.7 per cent thinking it definitely should be to 58.6 per cent). There were also relatively high levels of support for providing an education of disadvantaged Australian high school leavers and the most qualified Australian high school leavers.
- With regards to research, Australians are most supportive of universities developing new ideas (55.6 per cent in April 2023). It is also noteworthy that 40.8 per cent of Australians think that one of the roles of education is to 'Provide an environment for controversial ideas to be expressed and debated.' This has been somewhat steady over the last four years.
- Australians appear to be less supportive of the public policy aspect of universities, than they are the research and teaching aspects. Only a little over one-quarter (27.3 per cent) of Australians think that it definitely should be a role of universities to 'Evaluate the effectiveness of government policies'. There are similarly low percentages for holding governments to account, tackling national/societal challenges, and release of data.
- The role that Australians are mostly likely to think is definitely a responsibility of schools is to 'Ensure young Australians have the essential skills in literacy and numeracy.' In April 2023, 83.6 per cent of Australians definitely thought that was a responsibility. However, there were also two thirds of Australians who thought it was definitely the responsibility of schools to 'Ensure students develop personal values and attributes such as honesty, empathy, loyalty, responsibility and respect for others.'
- The student-type that respondents were most supportive of schools providing additional funding for were those with a disability (64.7 per cent in 2023) followed by roughly equal percentages supporting additional funding for students from remote and regional communities (58.9 per cent) and those from a socio-economically disadvantaged background (56.7 per cent). There was the lowest level of support for a responsibility of schools definitely being to provide additional resources and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (43.6 per cent).

1 Introduction and overview

The COVID-19 pandemic was a massive shock to education systems across the world, including Australia. In the early days of the pandemic, almost all education providers rapidly transitioned to online instruction (Rajmil et al. 2021). This included early childhood education, primary and secondary school, vocational education and training (VET), and universities. Even in early-2020 it was known that the age profile of COVID-19 complications and deaths skewed towards the upper end of the age distribution (Barek et al. 2020). However, while the virus was still in circulation, children and young adults were still at a heightened risk compared to pre-COVID. Furthermore, the health and welfare of educators who could be much older than their students, as well as mature-age students and those who were otherwise immunocompromised were at an even greater risk relative to pre-COVID.

By the time the COVID-19 virus was mostly eliminated from circulation in Australia in mid-2020, schools and early childhood education began to revert to in-person instruction. This was partly driven by the return to face-to-face work for many adults, and the need for care options for children. However, it was also motivated by the recognition, and emerging empirical evidence that online instruction was likely to be having negative impacts on the mental health, wellbeing, and cognitive/non-cognitive development of students (Goldfeld et al. 2022).

For many jurisdictions, state-wide lockdowns of schools did not return beyond 2020, apart from short periods of time. For others, in particular Victoria and to a lesser extent New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, there were repeated and extended school closures in 2020 and 2021 as new outbreaks of the virus occurred. For all jurisdictions, however, even as vaccines became widely available and were shown to be effective (Zheng et al. 2022), there were isolated closures for specific locations or schools, and ongoing disruption as individuals (including educators) who returned a positive test were required to isolate, and other viruses like Influenza returned to circulation and spread widely (Goldfeld et al. 2022).

For universities and VET to a lesser extent, the experience during COVID-19 was somewhat different. While there were closures and restrictions on face-to-face learning that coincided with school closures, there was the additional impact of the closing of international borders (Mishra et al. 2020). This meant that international students were not able to travel to Australia to undertake their degree in person. Such students made up a large proportion of all students particularly amongst postgraduates, at particular institutions, and for particular degree programs.[1]

Just prior to COVID-19 in 2019, there were 756,713 international students studying on a student visa. This dropped to 687,023 in 2020, and further to 572,349 in 2021. Because a large proportion of students were not able to travel to Australia, even through to the end of 2022 when Australian borders were open but some source countries were restricting outbound travel, online instruction was the norm for most students for a large proportion of the pandemic, even if campuses were technically open again.

While COVID-19 was arguably the biggest short-term shock to education in Australia since at least World War II, there have been other ongoing trends and emerging issues that have added to the disruption experienced by the sector. Apart from the short-term COVID-19 impact on hours worked in 2020, Australia has had a very tight and tightening labour market for a number of years, with the unemployment rate estimated to be 3.5 per cent per cent in the most recent (June 2023) Labour Force Survey.[2] This tight labour market has two main effects on education.

First, a tight labour market reduces the economic returns to education as the opportunity cost of study increases and the predicted future income stream for non-graduates goes up (Black et al. 2005). This is counteracting the more medium term trend whereby in most advanced countries returns to education have been increasing, as part of a process known as skills-biased structural (or technological) change (Buera et al. 2022).

The second effect of a tight labour market is that there is increased competition for educators. This can make it harder to recruit and retain skilled workers in the sector, leading to shortages in addition to those that have been building in the education profession for a number of years (Sullivan et al. 2019).

The school system in Australia has also been in the process of changing to one where a much higher proportion of students attend private schools. In the 2021 Census, for example, 31.4 per cent of primary school students were attending a non-government school, alongside 42.6 per cent of secondary students. The impact of such a shift is contested with some celebrating the increase in parental choice (Fahey 2019), but others expressing concern for the creation of a two or multi-tiered system (Greenwell and Bonnor 2022). Whether in net terms one sees the increase in private school attendance as a positive or negative, there is no doubt that the schooling experience of many current school students is quite different to their parents or grandparents.

Caught up in the discussion on private versus public schooling is a large and widening level of education inequality in Australia (Hetherington 2018). We can define equity loosely as students from relatively disadvantaged backgrounds progressing at least as well as their advantaged peers or the school system ideally narrowing and definitely not exacerbating existing inequalities. Under such a definition, Australia has not been achieving its goals. In their recent review, the Productivity Commission (2022) concluded that 'equity remains a key challenge across Australia' and Thomson (2021) concluding based on data from the Program of International Student Assessment (PISA) that in Australia 'students are not being adequately supported by government education policies that fail to provide funding where it is most desperately needed—for basics such as infrastructure and materials, good quality teachers, or enough teachers.'

Part of the response to school-based education inequality is through reducing funding differentials. This was the approach advocated by the Gonski review with government funding of schools tied to need and capacity to pay.[3] The way the review has been implemented though, has meant that in many ways resources have flowed at an increasing rate to schools that cater to advantaged students.[4] Furthermore, changing funding formulae is unlikely to be sufficient, as peer effects and accumulated wealth of many schools will remain (Greenwell and Bonnor 2022).

The funding of universities is also undergoing a substantial public debate at the moment, as part of the Accord process initiated by the Federal Australian Labor Party (ALP) after the 2022 election. This review was partly driven by the impact of the COVID-induced reduction in international students mentioned earlier. However, even prior to the pandemic many including the then ALP opposition were arguing that the funds received by universities had not kept up with the cost of higher education delivery.

On the 30th June 2023 the Australian Universities Accord Review Panel provided their Interim Report to the Minister for Education, and on the 19th of July 2023, the report was released to the public.[5] While the report was not completely negative or pessimistic, pointing out the

contribution that Higher Education continues to make to students and broader society, the review started by stating that 'To successfully tackle our big national priorities – including lifting economic productivity, making a clean energy transition, building a caring society, meeting the defence and security challenges of our region, and strengthening our democratic culture – our higher education sector must become much, much stronger.' The review then went on to recommend a number of broad actions, with each of the actions containing a number of specific recommendations. The actions relate to access to university for regional and remote students, as well as improving funding certainty and university governance.

In the midst of these education changes, the emergence of new technology and in particular Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) has further complicated the delivery of education. There will undoubtedly be benefits to students and educators from technology like ChatGPT and similar with menial tasks increasingly able to be undertaken by algorithm, and students and educators able to focus on the tasks for which they have a comparative advantage (Baidoo-Anu and Owusu Ansah 2023). At the time of writing though, some of the challenges from recent AI advances are more apparent. This includes the difficulties in determining and assessing work that has been submitted by students but generated by AI (Swiecki et al. 2022); the use of data from students and educators who are using AI (Huang 2023); and the changing labour market of the future that may make certain qualifications less useful, and others more in demand but with insufficient educators to meet that demand (Johnson and Acemoglu (2023).

With all this long-term, recent, and forthcoming change in education, it is an opportune time to revisit the views and attitudes towards education in Australia, how these attitudes vary across the population, and how they have changed over time. The paper uses data collected as part of the ANUpoll series of surveys, with this particular wave collected in April 2023 and exploring the opinion of almost four-and-a-half thousand Australian adults. Responses are compared to previous waves of data, including one of the earliest ANUpolls in 2008, as well as surveys undertaken during the height of the pandemic.

After describing this data in more detail, the remainder of the paper is structured as follows. We begin with a short summary of the level of confidence that Australians have in schools and universities, and how this confidence has changed over the short and medium term (Section 3). We then consider whether the perceptions of the benefits of education and the barriers to accessing education have changed (Section 4). In Section 5 we dig deeper into views on the performance and funding of education, with Section 6 outlining in detail what Australians think the role of education should be. Finally, Section 7 provides some concluding comments.

2 Data description

Data for this paper has been collected as part of the ANUpoll series of surveys. Data collection commenced on the 11th of April 2023 with a pilot of 9 respondents. The main data collection commenced on the 12th of April 2023, with fieldwork concluding on the 23rd of April. A total of 4,469 respondents are available on the dataset with 57.1 per cent of the sample having completed the survey completed between the 11th and 14th of April.

The sample was collected as a combination of online (98.5 per cent) and Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (1.5 per cent) in order to ensure representation from the offline Australian population. A total of 5,975 panel members were invited to take part in the April 2023 survey, leading to a wave-specific completion rate of 74.8 per cent.[6]

This is the 48th ANUpoll, with the first ANUpoll collected in June 2008. In April 2020, the Social Research Centre on behalf of the ANU Centre for Social Research and Methods collected the first wave of data as part of the centre's COVID-19 Impact Monitoring Series, which was incorporated into the ANUpoll series.[7] Since that first wave of COVID-19 data collection, surveys were undertaken a further 13 times with the final wave of data collection for the COVID-19 Impact Monitoring Series undertaken in January 2023. This survey is the first of our post-COVID surveys as part of the ANUpoll series.

Data in the paper is weighted to population benchmarks. For Life in Australia™, the approach for deriving weights generally consists of the following steps:

1. Compute a base weight for each respondent as the product of two weights:
    a. Their enrolment weight, accounting for the initial chances of selection and subsequent post-stratification to key demographic benchmarks
    b. Their response propensity weight, estimated from enrolment information available for both respondents and non-respondents to the present wave.
2. Adjust the base weights so that they satisfy the latest population benchmarks for several demographic characteristics.

A number of questions in the education modules were taken from the September 2008,[8] April 2019,[9] and/or the November 2020 ANUpolls.[10] In addition to the two education modules (Module F – Value of higher education, and Module H – Role of education) that followed Module C, the survey included the following modules (in order of presentation):

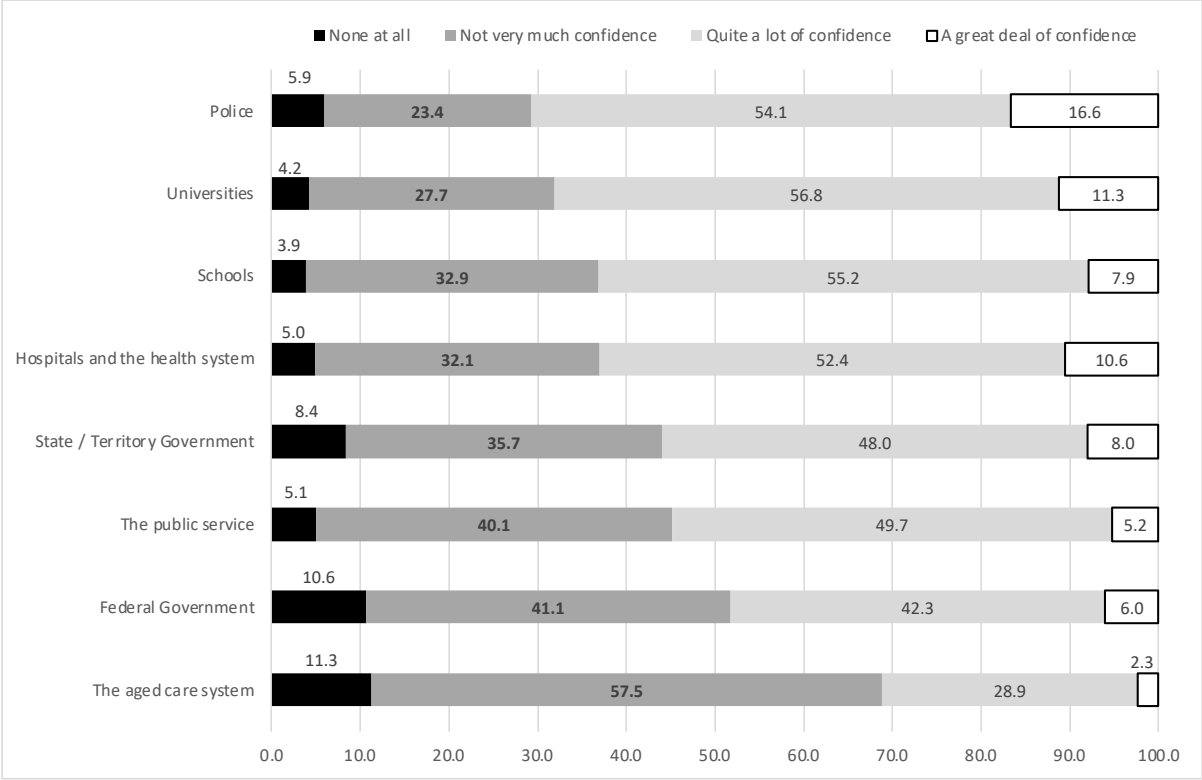
- Module A – Political views, confidence in institutions (including universities and schools), and life satisfaction.
- Module B – Experiences with COVID-19
- Module D – Mental health
- Module E – Employment, income, and financial hardship
- Module C – Policy issues (including prices)
- Module G – Science and Artificial Intelligence
- Module J – Uluru statement
- Module X – Volunteering
- Module Z – Additional education questions

The full questionnaire, technical report, and unit record data from the survey is available through the Australian Data Archive – doi:10.26193/CI4Z2S.

3 Confidence in education institutions

One of the first questions in the survey asks respondents for their confidence in a range of institutions. Figure 1 shows the level of confidence in schools and universities, placed in the context of a range of other institutions (ordered by the per cent of Australians with either a great deal or quite a lot of confidence). Education institutions in Australia inspire a large degree of confidence, with only police having a greater level of confidence. There is slightly more confidence in universities compared to schools, with the latter having a similar level of confidence as hospitals and the health system.

Figure 1 Confidence in institutions, including universities and schools, April 2023

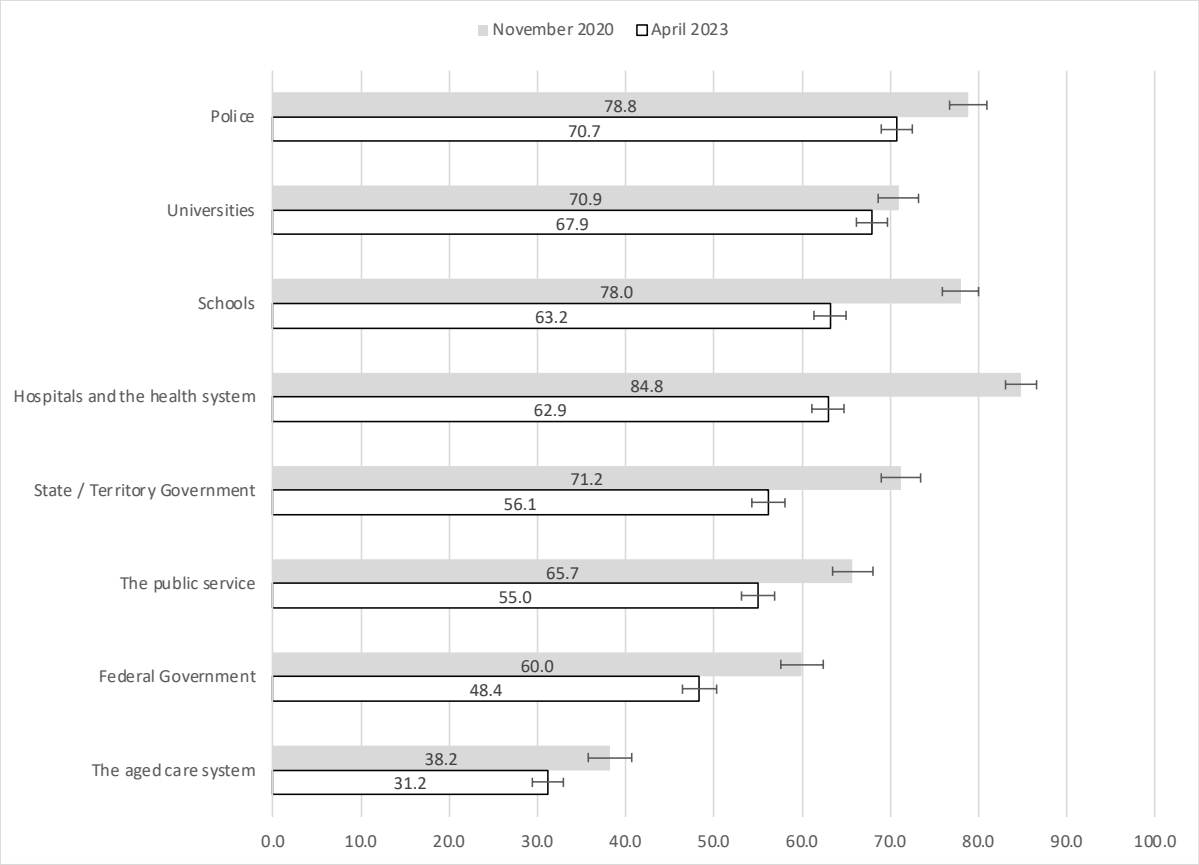


Confidence in education institutions has declined since the height of the pandemic (Figure 2). In November 2020 we asked the same question about the same institutions. The drop in universities was modest – from 70.9 per cent having quite a lot or a great deal of confidence in November 2020 compared to 67.9 per cent in April 2023. This is the smallest decline of all the institutions that we asked about, with the next smallest decline being for police (from 78.8 per cent to 70.7 per cent over the same period). Indeed, universities are the only institution where the error bars across the two years overlap.

Over the longer term though, there has been a substantial decline in confidence in universities. When this question was asked in the very first ANUpoll in March 2008, 81.1 per cent of Australians expressed quite a lot or a great deal of confidence in universities. Once again though, the decline in confidence in universities is consistent with a decline over that period in some other institutions (the decline for police was similar), though it should be noted that there has been some convergence with confidence in the federal government and the public service.

Although we do not have as long-term data for schools, the results presented in Figure 2 show that schools have lost a much greater level of confidence since the first year of the pandemic. In November 2020, 78.0 per cent of Australians had quite a lot or a great deal of confidence in schools. This declined to 63.2 per cent in April 2023. While there is a risk of reading too much into two data points, the results in Figure 2 provide some evidence that Australians were very supportive of schools in the early stages of the pandemic, but became less supportive as the pandemic continued and post-pandemic.

Figure 2 Per cent of Australians who had quite a lot or a great deal of confidence in institutions, November 2020 and April 2023



4 Perceptions of the benefits of and barriers to education

While there is very strong evidence that there are economic benefits to completing a degree in Australia, very few Australians think that a university education is an absolute necessity. Indeed, perhaps reflecting the tight labour market now compared to the mid-2000s, fewer Australians think a university education is a necessity now compared to then.

Specifically, respondents to the April 2023 and September 2008 ANUpolls were asked which of the following two statements came closer to their view – (1) A university education is necessary for a person to be successful in today's work world, or (2) There are many ways to succeed in today's work world without a university education. In April 2023, 14.2 per cent of Australians were more inclined to think university is necessary than that there are many other ways to succeed. This is a slight decline from the 18.4 per cent of Australians who thought university was necessary when asked in September 2008.

We can take this as an indication of a decline in the perceived benefits of education. There does not appear, however, to have been an increase in the perceived costs or barriers. Respondents were asked 'Would you say getting a university education has become more difficult, less difficult, or no different than it was 10 years ago?', using the same question and response options as in September 2008. If we excluded those who did not know, around one-third of Australians (34.8 per cent) thought that university had become more difficult. This is slightly higher than the roughly one-quarter of Australians (22.9 per cent) who in 2023 thought that university had become less difficult, with the most common response being that compared to 10 years ago it was about as difficult (42.3 per cent). However, the important point to note is that the per cent of Australians in 2023 who thought that getting a university

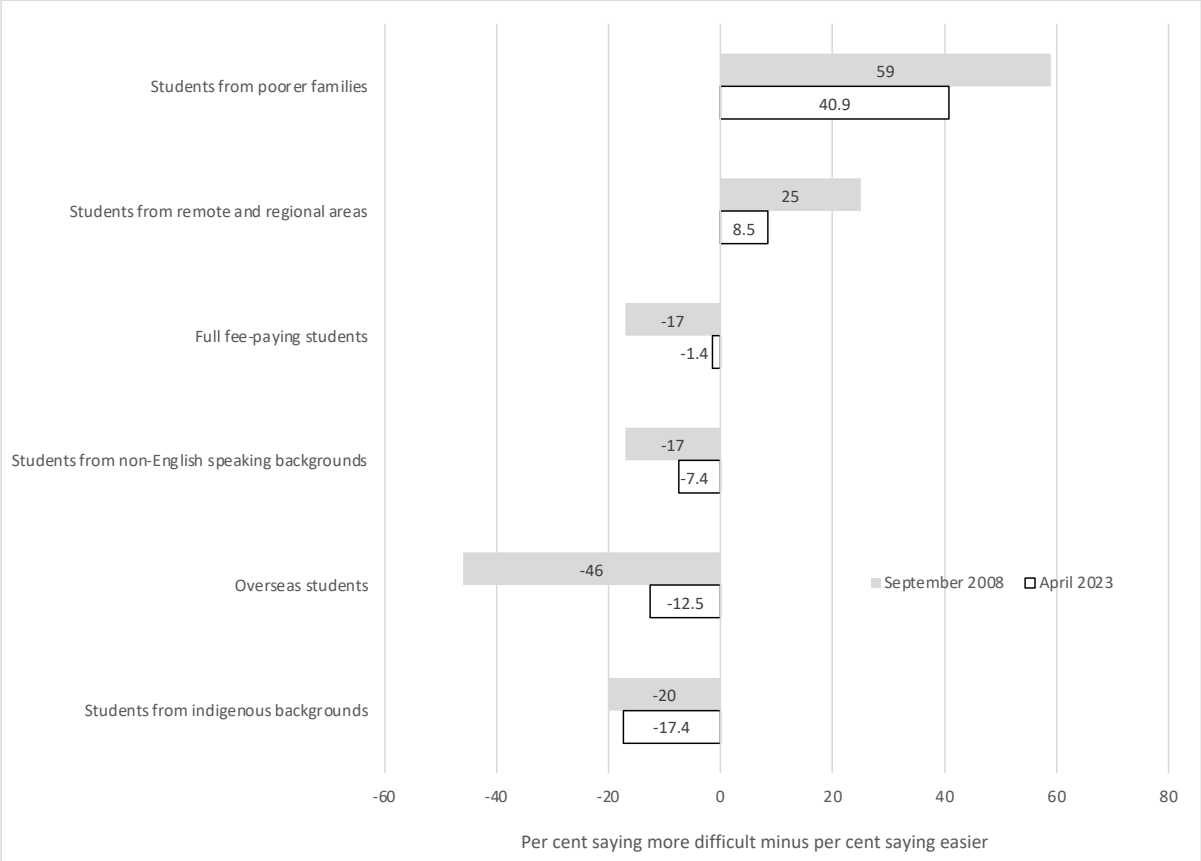
education was more difficult (34.8 per cent) \was substantially lower than the 61.9 per cent of Australians who thought that getting a university education had become harder in the 10-year leading up to the 2008 survey.

We can start to understand what the perceived barriers to education are, and how these perceptions have changed through time by asking respondents for which groups they think getting a university education has become harder. We use the same question as was asked in September 2008 and present results in the same way, namely the per cent saying access to higher education is more difficult for that group minus the per cent who see it as less difficult. A higher (more positive) number indicates respondents think it has become more difficult, whereas a lower (more negative) number indicates respondents think it has become easier, or barriers to access have reduced. Figure 3 orders the groups by the net perceived change in difficulty in the 10 years leading up to the 2023 survey, with the same population groups used as in 2008..

The student type that Australians thought access barriers had increased the most for in the 10 years up to 2023 were 'students from poorer families', with a net difference of 40.9 per cent. While this is slightly less than the net difference observed in September 2008 (59 per cent), it is clear that Australians think financial barriers are most salient, or at least increasing the most. In net terms, Australians also think that things are getting more difficult for students from remote and regional areas, but they are equally likely to think access is getting easier for full fee-paying students as they are to think it is getting harder. This is different to the results in 2008 when there was a net difference of -17 per cent, meaning that in 2008 Australians thought it was getting easier for full-fee paying students to access university, whereas now they think things have been relatively stable over the last 10 years.

There are three groups for whom Australians think access to university in net terms has gotten easier – those from a non-English speaking background (-7.4 per cent in net terms), overseas students (-12.5 per cent) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (-17.4 per cent). For the first two of these, Australians are far less likely to think that things have gotten easier over the last 10 years when asked in April 2023 compared to September 2008. However, Australians are roughly as likely to think that things have gotten easier for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students now as they were in 2008.

Figure 3 Perceived net change in difficulties accessing higher education, September 2008 and April 2023



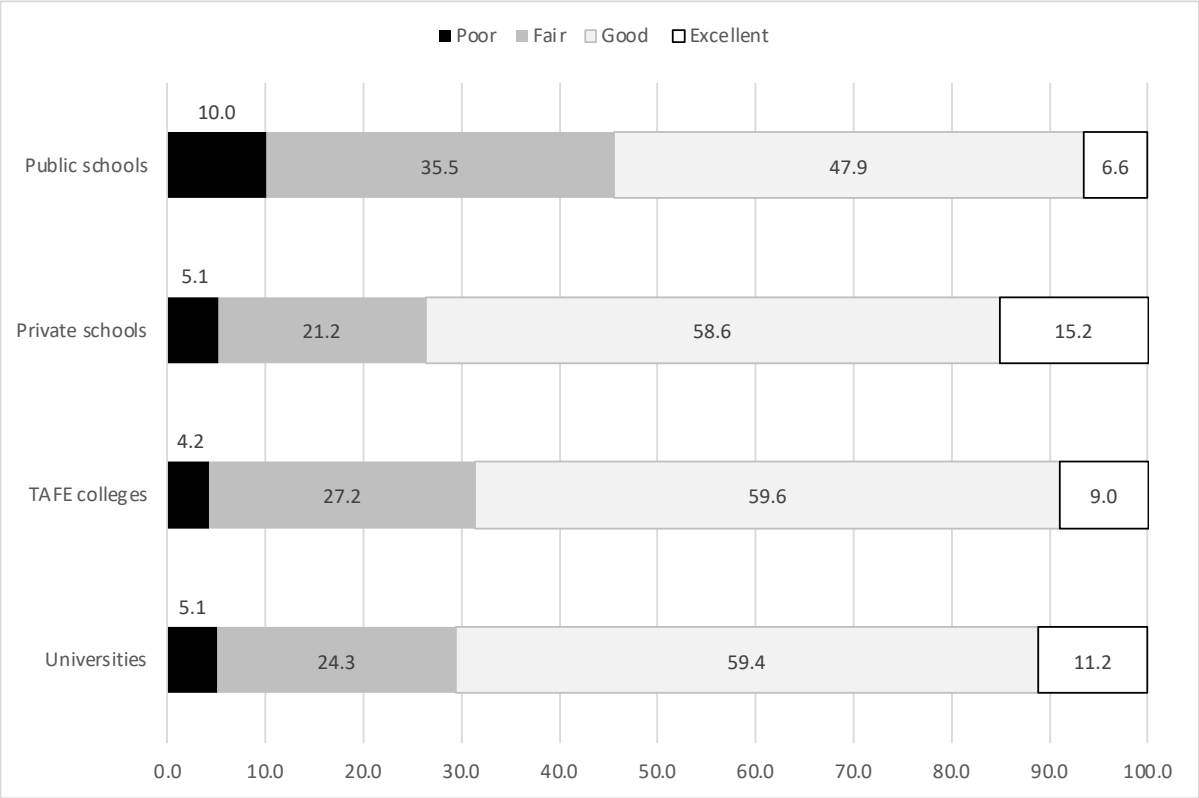
5 Education performance and funding

5.1 Views on education performance

Despite Australians thinking that universities have become more difficult to access, on balance most Australians still think that they are doing a good job. Asked specifically about education institutions in their own State/Territory, Figure 4 shows that 11.2 per cent of Australians thought that universities were doing an excellent job, with the most common response (given by 59.4 per cent of Australians) being that universities were doing a good job. Only 5.1 per cent of Australians thought that universities were doing a poor job, with the remaining one-quarter (24.3 per cent) of Australians thinking universities were doing a fair job.

The education institution that was viewed by the highest proportion of Australians as doing an excellent job were private schools. In April 2023, 15.2 per cent of Australians thought that private schools were doing an excellent job, with an additional 58.6 per cent thinking they were doing a good job. There was much less support for the view that public schools were doing an excellent job, with only 6.6 per cent of Australians thinking they were, and only an additional 47.9 per cent of Australians thinking public schools were doing a good job. This leaves close to half of the population who though that public schools were doing a poor job (10.0 per cent) or a fair job (35.5 per cent).

Figure 4 Views on how well education institutions were doing in their state/territory



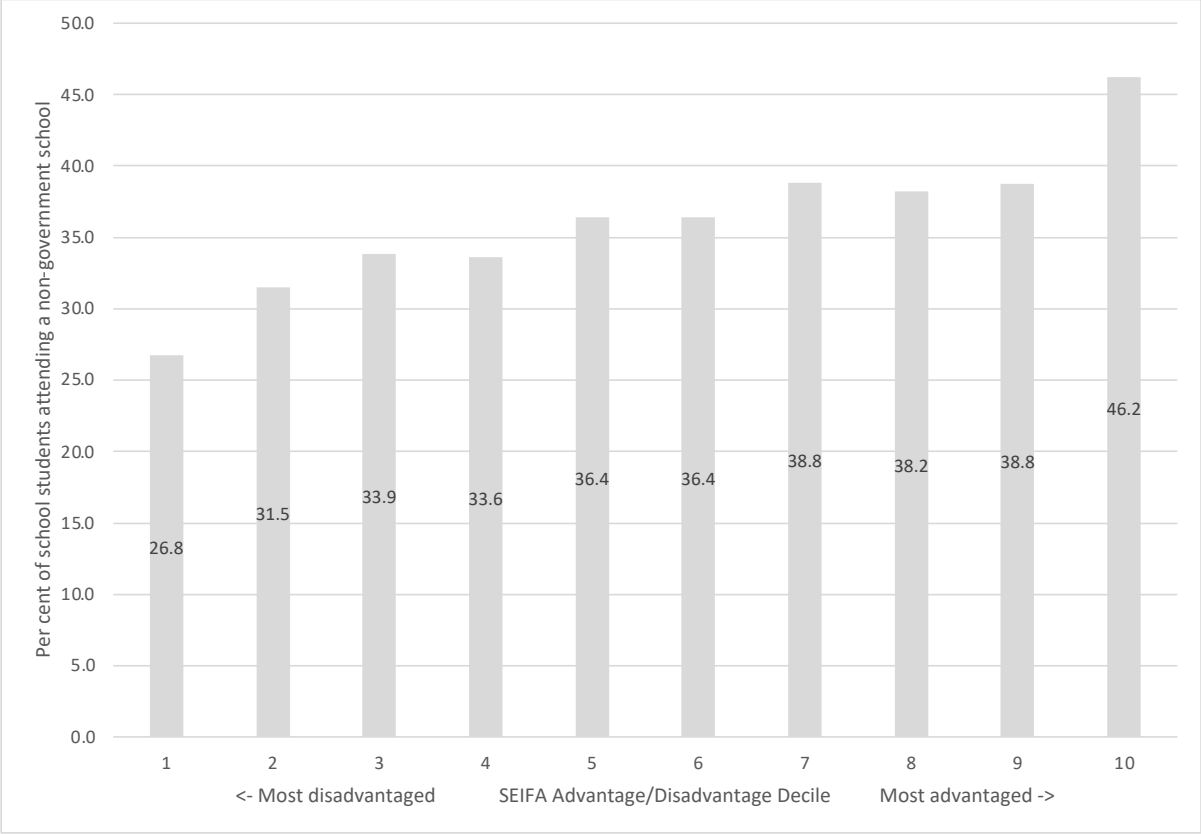
Between August 2008 and April 2023 there have been declines in the per cent of Australians who think many of the education institutions are doing a good or excellent job. Excluding those who said they did not know, when asked in August 2008, 79.5 per cent of respondents thought private schools were doing a good or excellent job. This declined to 73.8 per cent in April 2023. There were also declines in the per cent of Australians who thought universities were doing a good job (from 78.9 to 70.6 per cent) and who thought TAFE Colleges were doing a good job (from 75.9 to 68.6 per cent).

The only type of institution that people were more likely to think was doing a good or excellent job over those fifteen years was public schools. In August 2008, less than half of adult Australians (48.9 per cent) thought that public schools were doing a good or excellent job. In April 2023, this had increased to 54.5 per cent. It is true that this was driven more by an increased number of people who thought that public schools were doing a good job (increasing to 47.9 per cent in April 2023 compared to 40.4 per cent in 2008) compared to an excellent job (steady at 6.6 per cent compared to 8.5 per cent). However, the overall increase was still statistically significant and meaningful in magnitude.

There were quite large differences in views on public schools by geography. Specifically, 50.4 per cent of Australians living in the two most disadvantaged quintiles of areas thought that public schools were doing a good or excellent job. This is significantly lower than the 56.5 per cent of Australians in the three most advantaged quintiles. This is particularly important because those Australians who live in relatively disadvantaged areas are more reliant on public schools than those who live in advantaged areas with much higher rates of public-school attendance in disadvantaged areas, as shown in Figure 5 which is based on data from the 2021 Census. Specifically, the figure shows that in the most disadvantaged quintile in Australia, only

a little over one quarter (26.8 per cent) of students attend a non-government school. In the most advantaged decile, on the other hand, close to one-half (46.2 per cent) do.

Figure 5 Per cent of school students attending a non-government school, by socioeconomic status of area, 2021



Source: Customised calculations from the 2021 Census of Population and Housing, Tablebuilder

5.2 Who is perceived to benefit the most from private and public schools

To explore the different ways in which Australians thought private and public schools were benefiting students, we asked respondents about the extent to which they thought different types of students would have better outcomes if they attended a public or a private school, or whether it would make no difference. Each respondent was asked about four types of students:

- A primary school student from a relatively advantaged family;
- A primary school student from a relatively disadvantaged family;
- A secondary school student from a relatively advantaged family; and
- A secondary school student from a relatively disadvantaged family.

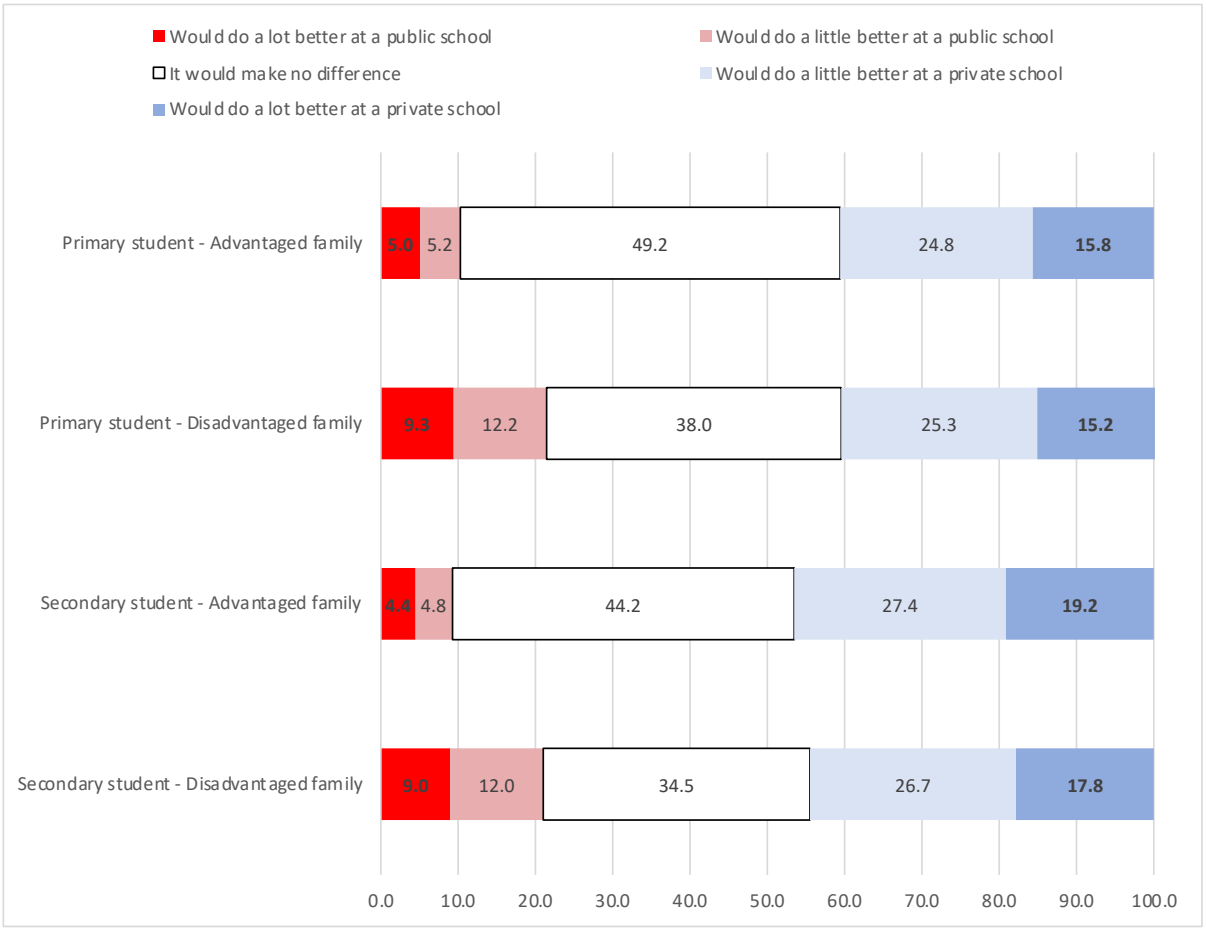
For 25 per cent of the sample (the control group), we asked the following specific question: 'To what extent do you think the following students would do better if they attended a public school or a private school, or would it make no difference?' We varied this question randomly across three other treatment groups (25 per cent of the sample each), substituting 'do better' in the question for the following treatments:

- Treatment 1 – have better literacy and numeracy;
- Treatment 2 – have better wellbeing; and
- Treatment 3 – do better after they have left school.

To begin with, we summarise the perceived differences combining the different treatment and control groups (Figure 6). First, we can see that people are far more likely to think that all four types of students would do better at a private school compared to a public school. The biggest difference is for secondary students from an advantaged family, with a net difference of 37.4 per cent (46.6 per cent thinking students would do better at a private school compared to 9.2 per cent thinking they would do better at a public school).

A second point to note from Figure 6 is that more people think that the type of school makes no difference for students from advantaged families compared to disadvantaged families. Around half of respondents (49.2 per cent) think that is makes no difference for advantaged primary school students, compared to only a little over one-third (34.5 per cent) who think it makes no difference for disadvantaged secondary school students. The final point to note though is that there is a sizable minority of respondents who think that disadvantaged students would do better at a public school (21.5 per cent for primary school students and 21.0 per cent for secondary school students).

Figure 6 Perceptions of the type of school where a student would do better, by type of student, April 2023



The general patterns described above hold across the different treatment groups. However, the treatments do appear to have an effect, though in different ways depending on the student and year level. To test for this, we ran a simple ordered probit model with higher values representing a higher perceived benefit of private schools. The only explanatory variables in the model are dummy variables for the treatment group that the respondent is in.

For primary school students in advantaged families, respondents were more likely to think that a private school would be better if it was framed as doing 'better after they have left school' (p-value = 0.037). This is also the case for secondary students from advantaged families, but the difference is only statistically significant at the 10 per cent level of significance (p-value = 0.065). For students from disadvantaged families, respondents are more likely to think private schools are better if it is framed as having better literacy and numeracy. The treatment effect is statistically significant at the 10 per cent level for primary school students (p-value = 0.100) and at the 5 per cent level of significance for disadvantaged secondary school students (p-value = 0.046).

5.3 Views on education funding

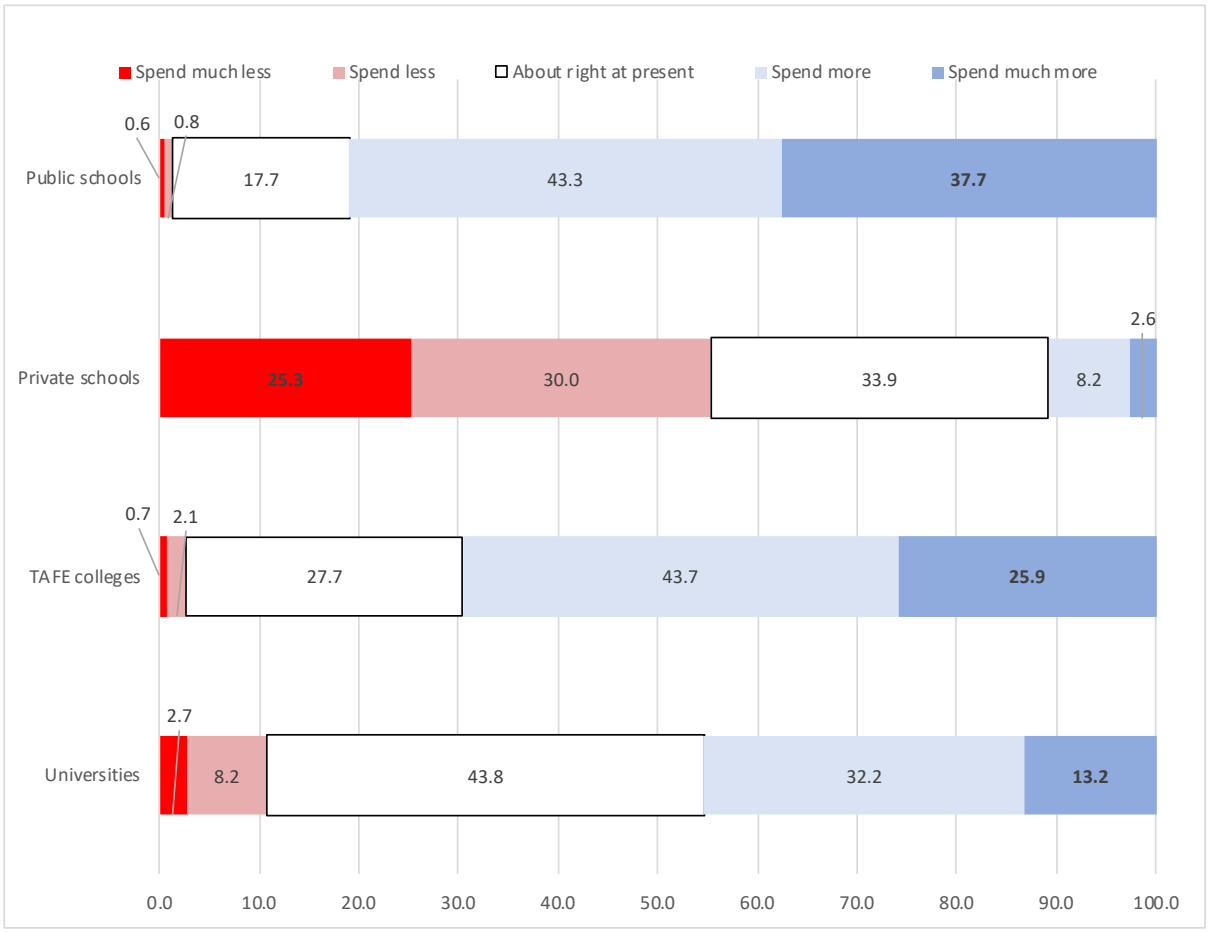
While private schools are seen as doing a better job than public schools, respondents to the survey were very clear that funding should be re-allocated to make the school systems far more balanced. We asked respondents 'Do you think that the government should spend more or spend less on the following types of education institutions, or do you think the current level of funding is about right?'

Comparing the two school sectors, a vanishingly small per cent of Australians thought that government should spend less on public schools (1.4 per cent). However, more than half of Australian adults thought that less should be spent on private schools, with around a quarter (25.3 per cent) thinking that much less should be spent, and three-in-ten Australians thinking that less should be spent. At the other end of the spectrum, more than four-in-five Australians (80.9 per cent) thought that more should be spent on public schools, compared to only a little over one-in-ten who thought that more should be spent on private schools.

In the tertiary education sector, there was strong support for more money to be spent on TAFE colleges, with 25.9 per cent of respondents thinking that much more should be spent, and 43.7 per cent thinking more should be spent.

For universities, the most common response was to say that spending was about right at present (43.8 per cent). However, there were about four times as many respondents who thought more should be spent (45.4 per cent) compared to those who thought less should be spent (10.8 per cent).

Figure 7 Funding priorities for different levels of education, April 2023



With the exception of private schools, Australians on balance think that more money should be spent on education in Australia, across a range of institutions. However, this support varies significantly across the population, by observed characteristics. We run a regression model, where the dependent variable is the extent to which people thought more (or less) should be spent on the different types of education. Explanatory variables include demographic, socioeconomic, and geographic characteristics of the individual respondent. Because the dependent variable can take on multiple categories, but these categories have an order to them, we estimate the relationship using the ordered probit model. Results are presented as coefficients in Table 1 below.

Females in general think that more money should be spent on education. There was no association, however, between respondent gender and support for additional funding for TAFE colleges. Older Australians (aged 75 years and over) were less supportive of additional funding for public schools, but more supportive of additional funding for private schools, TAFE colleges, and universities. Younger Australians (aged 18 to 24) were more supportive of additional funding for universities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians were more supportive of additional funding for public schools and TAFE colleges. Those born overseas in a non-English speaking country, and those who speak a language other than English at home are much more supportive of additional funding for universities.

Not surprisingly, a person's own level of education is predictive of their support for additional education funding. Support for additional funding for public schools was reasonably consistent across the population, though those with an undergraduate degree were slightly more likely to support additional funding than those who have completed Year 12 but do not have a post-school qualification. Somewhat surprisingly, those who have not completed Year 12 are more supportive of additional funding for private schools, though they are less supportive of additional funding for universities. More predictively, those who have a non-university qualification as their highest level of education were more supportive of additional funding for TAFE colleges, whereas those who have a degree were more supportive of additional funding for universities.

Table 1 Factors associated with views on funding of education, April 2023

Explanatory variables	Public schools		Private schools		TAFE colleges		Universities	
	Coeff.	Signif.	Coeff.	Signif.	Coeff.	Signif.	Coeff.	Signif.
Female	0.092	**	0.095	**	-0.044		0.114	***
Aged 18 to 24 years	0.027		0.092		-0.024		0.223	**
Aged 25 to 34 years	0.007		-0.001		-0.022		-0.027	
Aged 45 to 54 years	0.004		-0.019		0.178	**	0.111	
Aged 55 to 64 years	-0.104		-0.011		0.168	**	0.140	*
Aged 65 to 74 years	-0.023		0.099		0.472	***	0.326	***
Aged 75 years plus	-0.252	***	0.248	***	0.401	***	0.246	***
Indigenous	0.360	**	0.126		0.333	*	0.270	
Born overseas in a main English-speaking country	-0.023		-0.005		-0.091		-0.030	
Born overseas in a non-English speaking country	0.018		0.116		-0.120		0.245	***
Speaks a language other than English at home	-0.061		0.154	**	0.007		0.170	**
Has not completed Year 12 or post-school qualification	0.030		0.216	**	-0.097		-0.216	**
Has a post graduate degree	0.113		0.061		0.124		0.306	***
Has an undergraduate degree	0.165	**	0.065		0.097		0.259	***
Has a Certificate III/IV, Diploma or Associate Degree	0.084		0.155	**	0.170	**	0.048	
Lives in the most disadvantaged areas (1st quintile)	0.143	*	0.133	*	0.071		0.089	
Lives in next most disadvantaged areas (2nd quintile)	0.095		0.078		0.001		0.061	
Lives in next most advantaged areas (4th quintile)	0.010		-0.027		-0.027		-0.001	
Lives in the most advantaged areas (5th quintile)	0.045		-0.114	*	-0.058		0.023	
Lives outside of a capital city	-0.059		-0.018		-0.039		-0.055	
Cut-point 1	-2.426		-0.435		-2.352		-1.607	
Cut-point 2	-2.091		0.378		-1.788		-0.900	
Cut-point 3	-0.748		1.503		-0.356		0.501	
Cut-point 4	0.453		2.232		0.821		1.539	
Sample size	4,360		4,351		4,355		4,333	

Notes: Ordered Probit regression model. The base case individual is male; aged 35 to 44 years; non-Indigenous; born in Australia; does not speak a language other than English at home; has completed Year 12 but does not have a post-graduate degree; lives in neither an advantaged or disadvantaged suburb (third quintile); lives in a capital city.

Coefficients that are statistically significant at the 1 per cent level of significance are labelled ***; those significant at the 5 per cent level of significance are labelled **, and those significant at the 10 per cent level of significance are labelled *

6 Perceived role of education

6.1 Role of the University

In a modern economy like Australia's, universities play a diverse role with multiple functions (Forsyth 2014). Unlike the system in the US where there are a greater number of Liberal Arts Colleges, in Australia most universities teach a breadth of subjects (vocational and non-vocational) and have a significant research component. Many of the roles of universities are complementary, with a focus in a number of universities on research-led teaching. The reality though is that there is an opportunity cost of many of the activities that universities undertake.

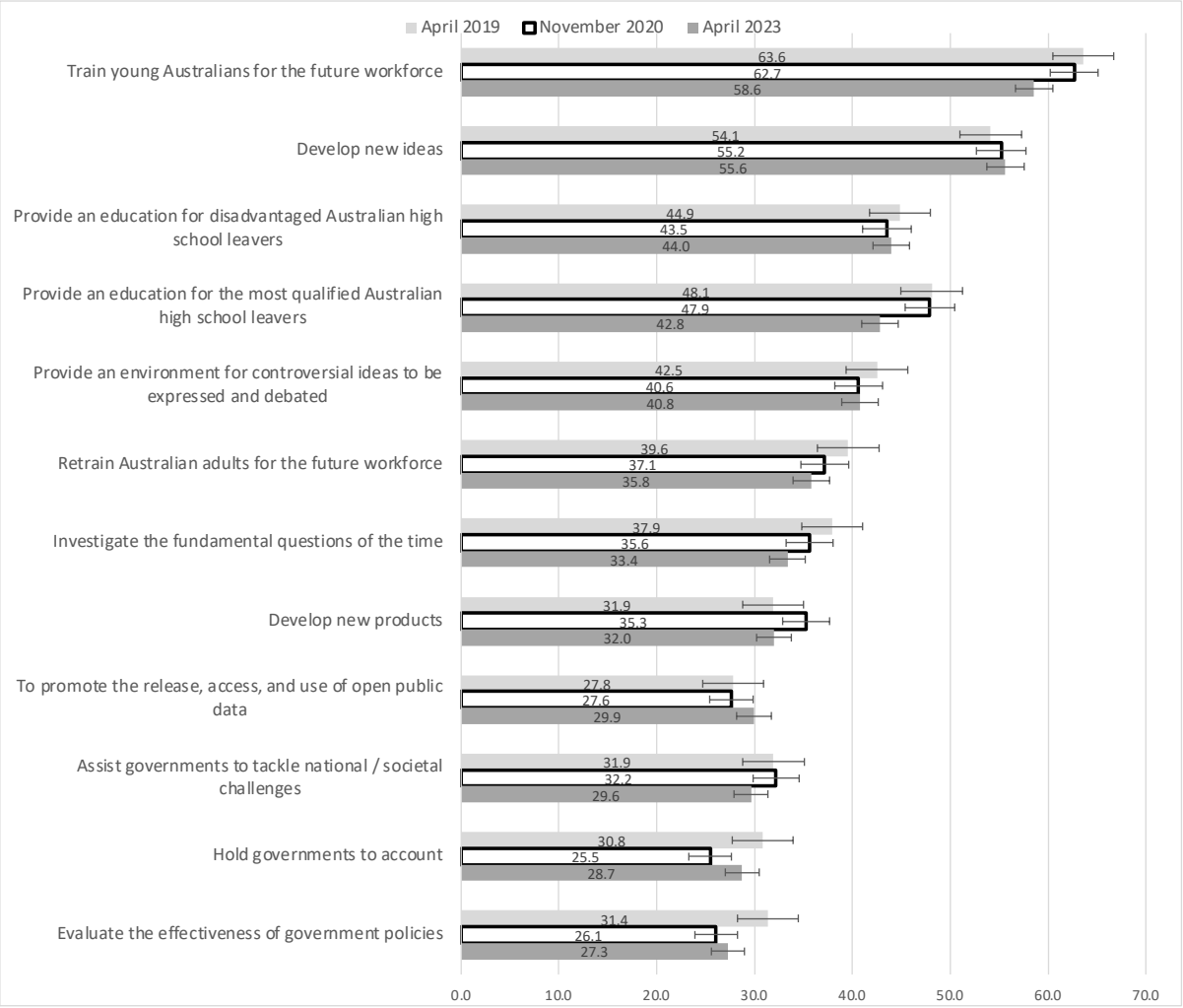
In April 2019 (pre-COVID), November 2020 (COVID), and April 2023 (post-COVID) we asked respondents 'Now thinking about University education, on the whole, do you think it should or should not be the responsibility of Universities in Australia to...?' with 12 potential roles and four response options: Definitely should be; Probably should be; Probably should not be; and Definitely should not be. Figure 8 gives the per cent of Australians who think each of the roles should definitely be the responsibility of universities, ordered from highest to lowest priority in April 2023.

The role of the university with the greatest level of support was to 'Train young Australians for the future workforce.' This was true in all three waves of data collection, however there was a drop in support between November 2020 to April 2023 (from 62.7 per cent thinking it definitely should be to 58.6 per cent). There were also relatively high levels of support for providing an education of disadvantaged Australian high school leavers and the most qualified Australian high school leavers. However, support for the latter has dropped somewhat (from 47.9 per cent in November 2020 to 42.8 per cent in April 2023), whereas support for educating the disadvantaged has stayed reasonably constant (44.0 per cent in April 2023). The education role that is of lowest priority for the Australian public is to 'Retrain Australian adults for the future workforce.' However, even this role has 35.8 per cent saying it definitely should be a responsibility.

With regards to research, Australians are most supportive of universities developing new ideas (55.6 per cent in April 2023). Furthermore, there has been some debate in Australia regarding free speech on campus (though not nearly as much as in the US and to a lesser extent the UK). It is noteworthy then that 40.8 per cent of Australians think that one of the roles of education is to 'Provide an environment for controversial ideas to be expressed and debated.' This has been somewhat steady over the last four years. There are roughly similar proportions of Australians who think a role of universities should be to 'Investigate the fundamental questions of the time' (33.4 per cent) and 'Develop new products' (32.0 per cent), highlighting the tension between the more applied and practical aspects of university research and the more theoretical and fundamental research.

Australians appear to be less supportive of the public policy aspect of universities, than they are the research and teaching aspects. Only a little over one-quarter (27.3 per cent) of Australians think that it definitely should be a role of universities to 'Evaluate the effectiveness of government policies'. There are similarly low percentages for holding governments to account, tackling national/societal challenges, and release of data. That does not mean that these roles are resisted by the general population (a large per cent of Australians think they should 'probably' be a role, rather than 'definitely'). Rather, it should be taken as a low *relative* prioritisation.

Figure 8 Per cent of Australians who think that particular roles definitely should be the responsibility of universities, April 2019, November 2020, and April 2023

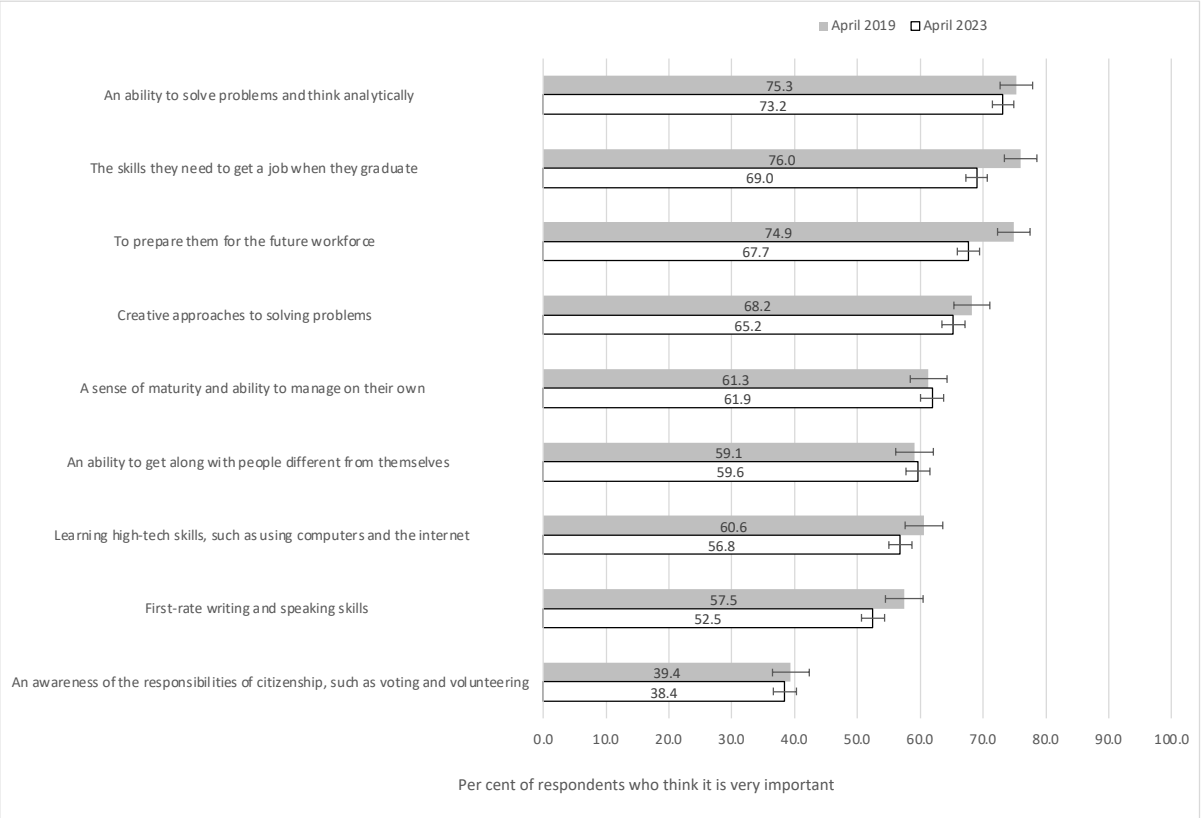


Education clearly remains the most important perceived role of university in Australia. However, there are many aspects of education that universities could focus on. We asked respondents 'The following is a list of skills and knowledge that students may gain from a university education. Please tell me how important you think each of these are …?' Figure 9 gives the per cent of Australians who think the particular type of skill or knowledge is very important, for both April 2019 and 2023.

The most important perceived skill for students as perceived by the Australian public is 'An ability to solve problems and think analytically.' Almost three quarters of Australians (73.2 per cent) think this is very important. The next most important was 'The skills they need to get a job when they graduate', though this had declined between April 2019 and 2023 (from 76.0 per cent to 69.0 per cent). There was also a decline in the per cent of Australians who thought that it was very important for universities to impart on students the skills and knowledge 'To prepare them for the future workforce' (from 74.9 to 67.7 per cent). These declines should not be overstated, the vast majority of Australians think these skills are very important. But, the tighter labour market in April 2023 compared to April 2019 may have had an influence on the decline.

Australians are least likely to think that universities should teach students 'An awareness of the responsibilities of citizenship, such as voting and volunteering.' This has stayed relatively low at 38.4 per cent.

Figure 9 Per cent of Australians who think that particular skills and knowledge are very important for students, April 2019, and April 2023



6.2 Role of schools

Like universities, the role of schools in Australia is equally diverse. Obviously, schools do not have a research function, but they are asked to do much more than just instruction. The final question in the April 2023 education module was 'Now thinking about school education, on the whole, do you think it should or should not be the responsibility of schools in Australia to...?' This question was repeated from the November 2020 ANUpoll, and Figure 10 gives the per cent of Australians who thought that a particular role was definitely the responsibility of schools in both years the question was asked.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the role that Australians are mostly likely to think is definitely a responsibility of schools is to 'Ensure young Australians have the essential skills in literacy and numeracy.' In April 2023, 83.6 per cent of Australians definitely thought that was a responsibility. However, there were also two thirds of Australians who thought it was definitely the responsibility of schools to 'Ensure students develop personal values and attributes such as honesty, empathy, loyalty, responsibility and respect for others.'

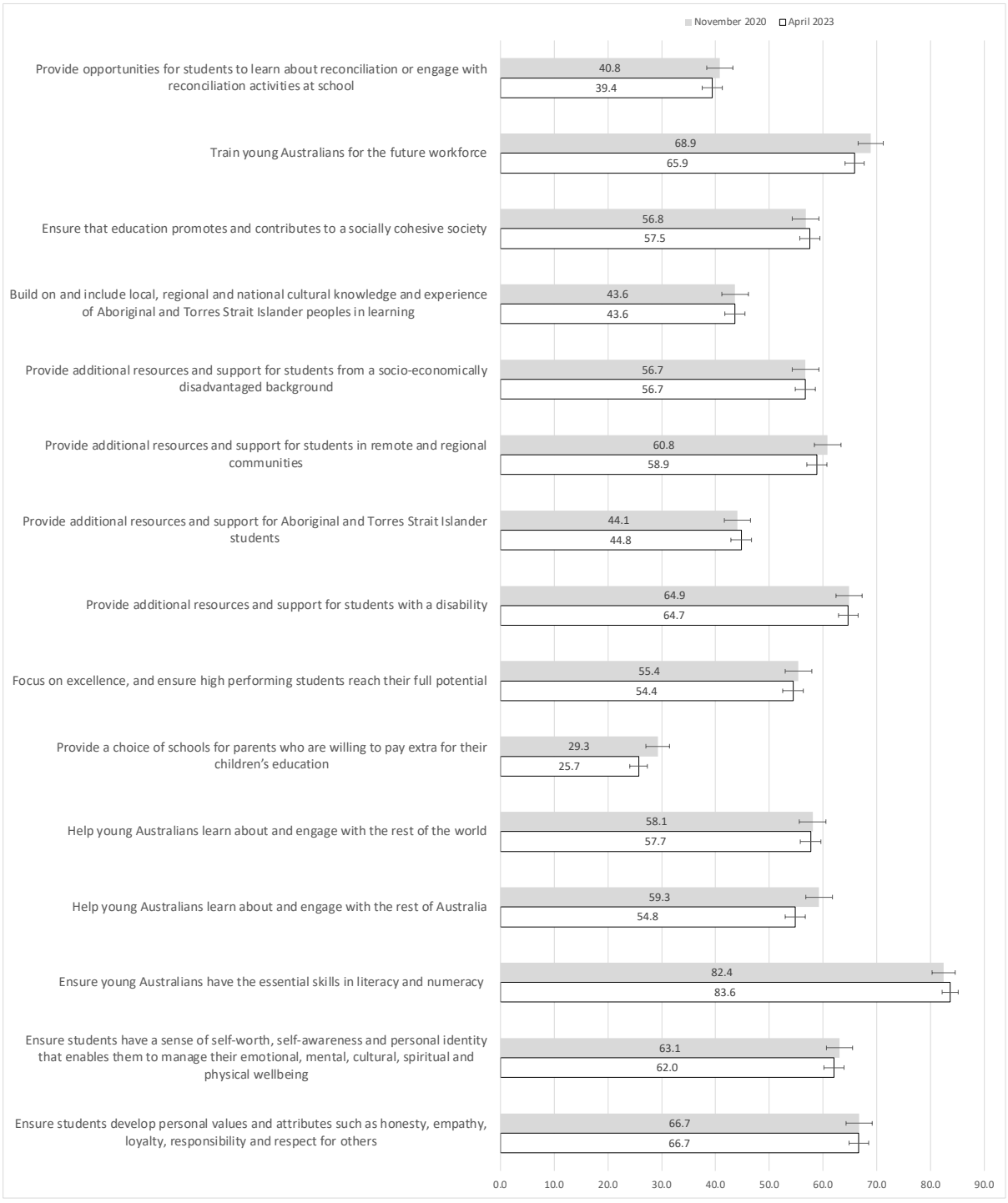
There were two responsibilities that were less likely to be seen as a responsibility in April 2023 compared to November 2020. Fewer Australians thought that it should definitely be a responsibility to 'Help young Australians learn about and engage with the rest of Australia' (54.8 per cent in April 2023 compared to 59.3 per cent in November 2020). However, there was also a large relative decline in the per cent of Australians who thought that schools should

definitely 'Provide a choice of schools for parents who are willing to pay extra for their children's education.' Not only did this have the lowest level of support in April 2023 (25.7 per cent), but there was also a large decline from November 2020 (29.3 per cent).

Although we didn't ask respondents to prioritise (and many of the roles are complements rather than substitutes), comparing some of the items can give a sense of implicit prioritisation. For example, we asked about four types of students that receive additional funding as part of the Commonwealth Government's Schools Resourcing Standard (SRS) funding formula. The student-type that respondents were most supportive of schools providing additional funding for were those with a disability (64.7 per cent in 2023) followed by roughly equal percentages supporting additional funding for students from remote and regional communities (58.9 per cent) and those from a socio-economically disadvantaged background (56.7 per cent). There was the lowest level of support for a responsibility of schools definitely being to provide additional resources and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Another comparison that is worth making is between schools having a responsibility to help learn about and engage with the rest of the world compared to the rest of Australia. While the difference isn't very large (57.7 per cent compared to 54.8 per cent respectively), the difference is statistically significant, and it is worth noting that it has only opened up since the end of COVID-19. Furthermore, even though it is not directly comparable, there was a much smaller per cent of respondents who thought it was a role of school to 'Provide opportunities for students to learn about reconciliation or engage with reconciliation activities at school' (39.4 per cent in 2023).

Figure 10 Per cent of Australians who think that particular roles definitely should be the responsibility of schools, November 2020 and April 2023



We can use the perceptions of Australians on the role of schools to better understand what is driving views on how public and private schools are doing, as well as whether they should receive more or less funding. We ran four ordered probit models, with each of these views as dependent variables. In the models, we controlled for background characteristics, including age, sex, other demographic characteristics, education, and location. For each of the dependent variables we then ran a model with views on all 15 of the roles of schools. From this first model, we then excluded all of the roles of school from the model that had a p-value

of greater than 0.2 and re-ran the model. After running this second model, we then excluded all of the roles that had a p-value of greater than 0.1 and re-estimate to create our final model.

Tables 2 and 3 give the results from these final models, ranging from two roles of school as the remaining explanatory variables (for how well a job private schools are doing) to ten roles of school (for funding of private schools).

Beginning with the background characteristics, older Australians think public schools are doing a better job, as do those who were born overseas in a non-English speaking country. As discussed earlier, those who live in the most disadvantaged areas are less likely to think that public schools are doing a good job.

Controlling for these background characteristics, support for four roles of school were associated with views on how well public schools are doing – two positive and two negative. Those who thought it was definitely a role of schools to provide additional resources and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were more likely to think schools were doing a good job, as did those who thought it was a role of school to ensure students have a sense of positive self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity. On the other hand, if a respondent thought it was the role of schools to provide a choice of schools for parents or to ensure students have essential skills in literacy and numeracy, they were less likely to think that public schools were doing a good job.

Looking at the second column of results, younger Australians are less likely to think private schools are doing a good job, whereas older Australians are more likely to. These are the only background characteristics associated with perceptions of private schools. There are two roles of education that are correlated with perceptions of how well private schools are going. Those who think that it is definitely a priority to focus on excellence and ensure high performing students reach their full potential are more likely to think private schools are doing a good job. Furthermore, and not surprisingly, those who are focused on school choice are more likely to think that private schools are doing a good job.

We discussed the background characteristics and their association with education funding in the previous section. We therefore focus in this section on associations with belief in the role of schools, keeping in mind though that these associations hold after controlling for those background characteristics. We find that views on five of the roles are associated with support for additional public education funding, with four having a positive association and one a negative association. With regards to the latter, those who thought a responsibility of schools is to provide school choice were less supportive of additional funding for public schools.

Support for the following roles of school had a positive association with support for additional public school funding:

- Build on and include local, regional and national cultural knowledge and experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in learning;
- Provide additional resources and support for students from a socio-economically disadvantaged background;
- Provide additional resources and support for students with a disability; and
- Help young Australians learn about and engage with the rest of the world.

Remembering back to Figure 7 and the high per cent of people who thought that private schools should receive less money and the relatively low per cent that thought they should receive more money, the final column of results should in some ways be interpreted as

associations with 'not wanting reduced funding' rather than wanting increased funding. With that in mind, there were ten roles of schools for which support was significantly associated with views on private school funding, though five of these were statistically significant at the 10 per cent level of significance only, rather than the 5 per cent level of significance.

Looking at those variables that were significant at the 5 per cent level, there were three that had a negative association, and two that had a positive association. Not surprisingly, those who have a strong belief in school choice were more supportive of private school funding. It is perhaps a little more surprising that being in support of school having a role in helping young Australians learn about and engage with the rest of the world.

The strongest negative association with support for private school funding was thinking that schools definitely had a role in ensuring young Australians have the essential skills in literacy and numeracy. This is in contrast to the model for public school funding, where that variable had a positive association. Australians who thought that a role of school was to 'Ensure that education promotes and contributes to a socially cohesive society' were less supportive of private school funding, as were those who thought that a role of school was to 'Provide additional resources and support for students with a disability.'

Table 2 Relationship between perceived role of schools and perceptions of how good a job schools are going, April 2023

Explanatory variables	Public schools		Private schools	
	Coeff.	Signif.	Coeff.	Signif.
Provide additional resources and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	0.183	***		
Focus on excellence, and ensure high performing students reach their full potential			0.149	***
Provide a choice of schools for parents who are willing to pay extra for their children's education	-0.140	***	0.214	***
Ensure young Australians have the essential skills in literacy and numeracy	-0.208	***		
Ensure students have a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage…	0.187	***		
Female	0.028		0.088	*
Aged 18 to 24 years	-0.066		-0.207	*
Aged 25 to 34 years	-0.032		0.008	
Aged 45 to 54 years	0.002		0.036	
Aged 55 to 64 years	0.060		0.091	
Aged 65 to 74 years	0.164	**	0.205	***
Aged 75 years plus	0.296	***	0.343	***
Indigenous	-0.022		-0.084	
Born overseas in a main English-speaking country	-0.050		0.038	
Born overseas in a non-English speaking country	0.157	**	-0.001	
Speaks a language other than English at home	0.102		0.080	
Has not completed Year 12 or post-school qualification	-0.006		0.013	
Has a post graduate degree	-0.102		-0.096	
Has an undergraduate degree	-0.065		-0.058	
Has a Certificate III/IV, Diploma or Associate Degree	0.031		-0.102	
Lives in the most disadvantaged areas (1st quintile)	-0.164	**	-0.046	
Lives in next most disadvantaged areas (2nd quintile)	-0.112		-0.072	
Lives in next most advantaged areas (4th quintile)	-0.044		-0.037	
Lives in the most advantaged areas (5th quintile)	0.047		0.036	
Lives outside of a capital city	0.005		0.049	
Cut-point 1	-1.289		-1.500	
Cut-point 2	-0.089		-0.471	
Cut-point 3	1.564		1.227	
Sample size	4,279		4,265	

Notes: Ordered Probit regression model. The base case individual is male; aged 35 to 44 years; non-Indigenous; born in Australia; does not speak a language other than English at home; has completed Year 12 but does not have a post-graduate degree; lives in neither an advantaged or disadvantaged suburb (third quintile); lives in a capital city.

Coefficients that are statistically significant at the 1 per cent level of significance are labelled ***; those significant at the 5 per cent level of significance are labelled **, and those significant at the 10 per cent level of significance are labelled *

Table 2 Relationship between perceived role of schools and views on funding of school education, April 2023

Explanatory variables	Public schools		Private schools	
	Coeff.	Signif.	Coeff.	Signif.
Provide opportunities for students to learn about reconciliation or engage with reconciliation activities at school			-0.113	*
Train young Australians for the future workforce			0.082	*
Ensure that education promotes and contributes to a socially cohesive society			-0.112	**
Build on and include … cultural knowledge and experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in learning	0.226	***	-0.104	*
Provide additional resources and support for students from a socio-economically disadvantaged background	0.356	***	-0.102	*
Provide additional resources and support for students with a disability	0.163	***	-0.150	***
Focus on excellence, and ensure high performing students reach their full potential			0.087	*
Provide a choice of schools for parents who are willing to pay extra for their children's education	-0.327	***	0.559	***
Help young Australians learn about and engage with the rest of the world	0.143	***	0.111	**
Ensure young Australians have the essential skills in literacy and numeracy			-0.301	***
Female	-0.006		0.154	***
Aged 18 to 24 years	-0.062		0.136	
Aged 25 to 34 years	-0.035		0.033	
Aged 45 to 54 years	-0.016		-0.006	
Aged 55 to 64 years	-0.114		0.021	
Aged 65 to 74 years	-0.069		0.149	**
Aged 75 years plus	-0.258	***	0.276	***
Indigenous	0.303	**	0.208	
Born overseas in a main English-speaking country	-0.018		0.002	
Born overseas in a non-English speaking country	0.012		0.096	
Speaks a language other than English at home	-0.020		0.122	
Has not completed Year 12 or post-school qualification	0.085		0.189	**
Has a post graduate degree	0.075		0.122	
Has an undergraduate degree	0.139	*	0.111	
Has a Certificate III/IV, Diploma or Associate Degree	0.062		0.186	***
Lives in the most disadvantaged areas (1st quintile)	0.154	**	0.117	
Lives in next most disadvantaged areas (2nd quintile)	0.122	*	0.040	
Lives in next most advantaged areas (4th quintile)	0.036		-0.050	
Lives in the most advantaged areas (5th quintile)	0.087		-0.127	**
Lives outside of a capital city	-0.038		-0.014	
Cut-point 1	-2.184		-0.663	
Cut-point 2	-1.863		0.191	
Cut-point 3	-0.450		1.371	
Cut-point 4	0.814		2.120	
Sample size	4,313		4,290	

Notes: Ordered Probit regression model. The base case individual is male; aged 35 to 44 years; non-Indigenous; born in Australia; does not speak a language other than English at home; has completed Year 12 but does not have a post-graduate degree; lives in neither an advantaged or disadvantaged suburb (third quintile); lives in a capital city.

Coefficients that are statistically significant at the 1 per cent level of significance are labelled ***; those significant at the 5 per cent level of significance are labelled **, and those significant at the 10 per cent level of significance are labelled *

7 Concluding comments

As the education sector in Australia continues to recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commonwealth government is undertaking two major reviews of funding and policy. The Australian Universities Accord Review Panel has argued that 'our higher education sector must become much, much stronger' whereas the 'Review to Inform a Better and Fairer Education System' also initiated by Minister Jason Clare is in the process of considering school funding and how to 'improve education outcomes in Australia and meet the current and future needs of students.'[11]

Both reviews aim to be evidence-based, and there is a range of evidence that should inform education policy in Australia. One potential source of evidence is public opinion on the performance and the role of schools and universities in Australia. With that in mind, the aim of this paper is to consider the views and attitudes towards education in Australia, how these attitudes vary across the population, and how they have changed over time. The paper uses data collected as part of the ANUpoll series of surveys, with this particular wave collected in April 2023 and exploring the opinion of almost four-and-a-half thousand Australian adults.

Respondents indicated that they had very positive views towards education in Australia. Universities and schools were some of the more trusted institutions in Australia (well above governments and the public service) and most people thought that schools, TAFE colleges and universities were doing a good or excellent job. Australians also see a very strong role for schools and universities in society, particularly the core roles of training young Australians for the future workforce and ensuring young Australians have the essential skills in literacy and numeracy.

While education institutions in general are well respected and well supported, there is some variation across the population and across institutions. Specifically, only a little over half of Australians think that public schools are doing a good or excellent job compared to almost three-quarters of Australians who think that private schools are. But it is clear from the data that this is partly due to perceived funding shortfalls. More than four-in-five Australians think that public schools should receive additional funding, and far more Australians think that private schools should receive less money (55.3 per cent) than think that they should receive more money (8.8 per cent).

Education in Australia need not be a zero-sum game, with money for one sector coming at the expense of money for another. However, national and state/territory budgets are constrained, and the reality is that there are opportunity costs of spending. The results presented in this paper clearly show that the general public thinks that a re-balancing is required.

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Endnotes

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2 https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release

3 https://www.education.gov.au/school-funding/resources/review-funding-schooling-final-report-december-2011

4 https://www.theguardian.com/education/2023/jul/17/gonski-review-government-funding-private-public-schools

5 https://www.education.gov.au/australian-universities-accord/resources/accord-interim-report

6 Taking into account recruitment to the panel, the cumulative response rate for this survey is around 3.8 per cent.

7 https://csrm.cass.anu.edu.au/research/publications/covid-19

8 https://csrm.cass.anu.edu.au/research/publications/anu-poll-takes-pulse-higher-ed-political-mood

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