

Staffing in Queensland Independent Schools, 2020

The number of staff employed in Queensland independent schools continues to increase. In the past year, from 2019 to 2020, staffing levels increased at a moderately lower annual rate than that of enrolments. Staffing numbers increased by 4.1% while enrolments increased by 4.5%.

Most staff are categorised as teaching staff, representing 58.8% of all staff in the independent schooling sector in 2020.

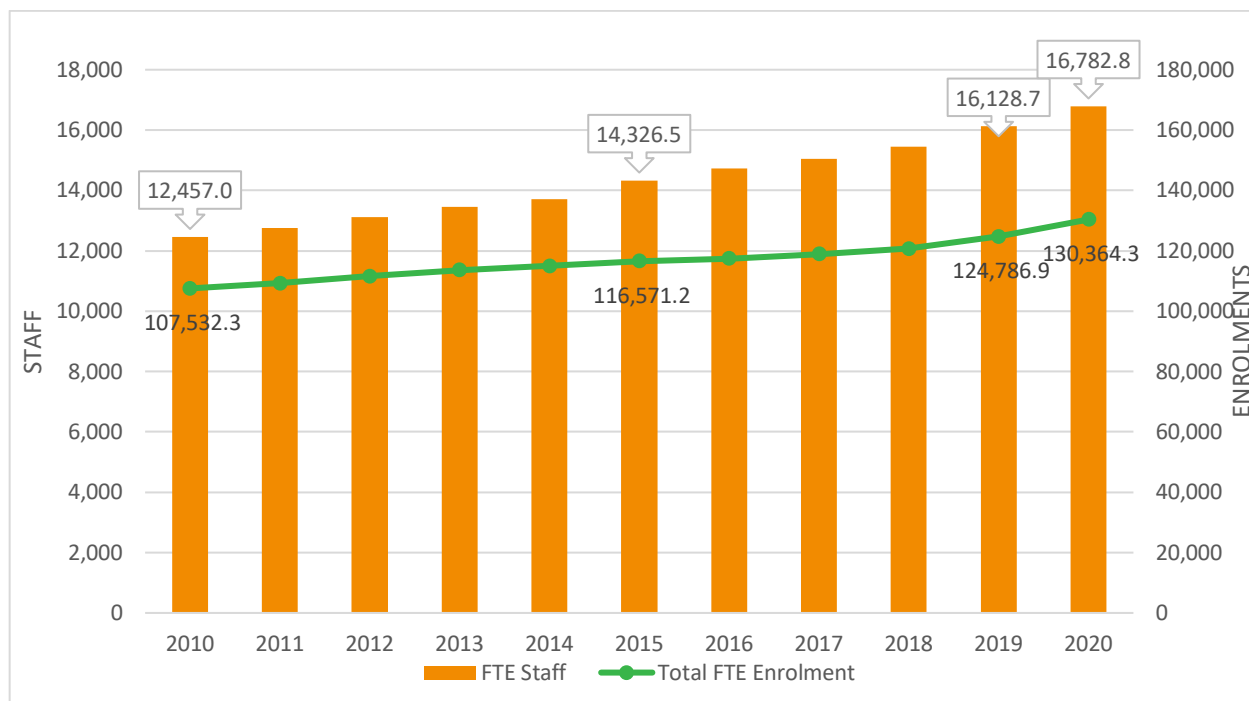
In 2020, on average, an additional full time equivalent (FTE) staff member was employed for every 7.8 additional students enrolled.

From 2019 to 2020, highest growth rate in primary staff occurred in specialist support positions while highest growth rate in secondary staff occurred in building operations and maintenance staff, slightly above growth in specialist support staff positions¹.

Total Staff

The total number of staff employed in Queensland independent schools continues to increase (refer Figure 1). In 2020 there were 654.1 more FTE staff than in 2019, with 16,782.8 staff in 2020 compared to 16,128.7 staff in 2019 (4.1% increase). This growth rate is lower than the annual rate of enrolment growth experienced from 2019 to 2020 (5,577.4 students or 4.5%).

Figure 1: Queensland Independent School FTE Staff and Enrolment Levels, 2010-2020



¹ A number of schools employ staff across both primary and secondary. These staff are distributed across primary and secondary based on enrolments.

Since 2010, the total number of FTE staff employed in Queensland independent schools has increased by 4,325.8 staff members. This represents an annual average growth rate of 6.1% over the ten-year period. This is significantly higher than the average annual rate of enrolment growth experienced over the same period (3.9% per annum).

Staffing by Functional Category

The majority of staff employed in Queensland independent schools is teaching staff. In 2020 teaching staff represented 58.8% of all school staff (refer Figure 1 and Table 1 below). The next highest proportion of staff (26.5%) were administrative and clerical staff (including teacher aides and assistants), followed by building operations, general maintenance and other staff (6.4%) and specialist support staff (6.4%).

Administrative and clerical staff (including teacher aides and assistants) represented a higher proportion of staff associated with primary schooling than secondary schooling (31.4% of primary staff compared to 23.0% of secondary staff, see Figure 3 and Figure 4). Conversely, teaching staff and specialist support staff represented a higher proportion of secondary staff than primary staff (61.4% and 7.4% of secondary staff respectively, compared to 55.0% and 4.9%, respectively, in primary).

Figure 3: Queensland Independent School FTE Staff by Functional Category (Primary), 2020

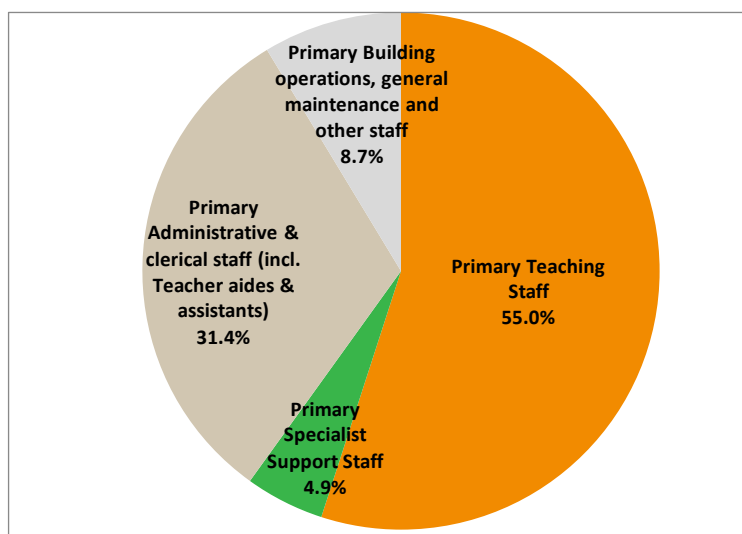


Figure 2: Queensland Independent School Total FTE Staff by Functional Category, 2020

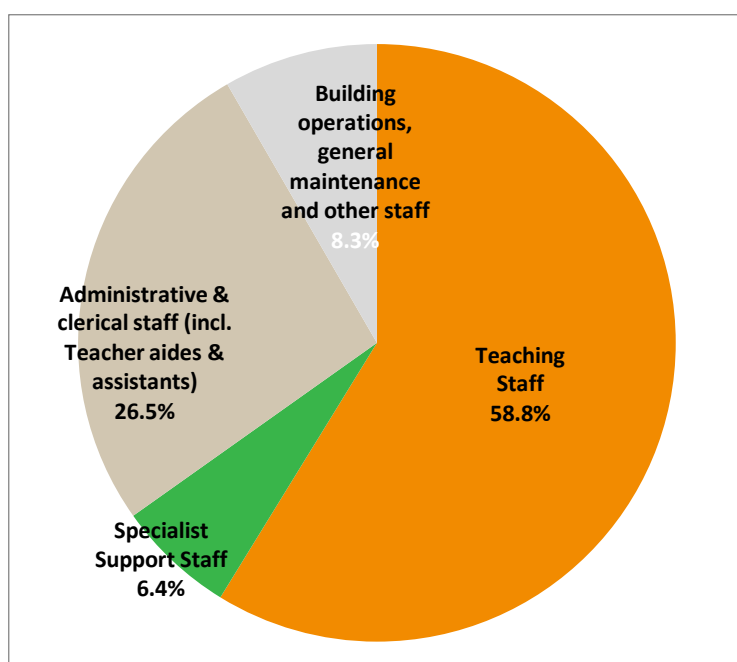
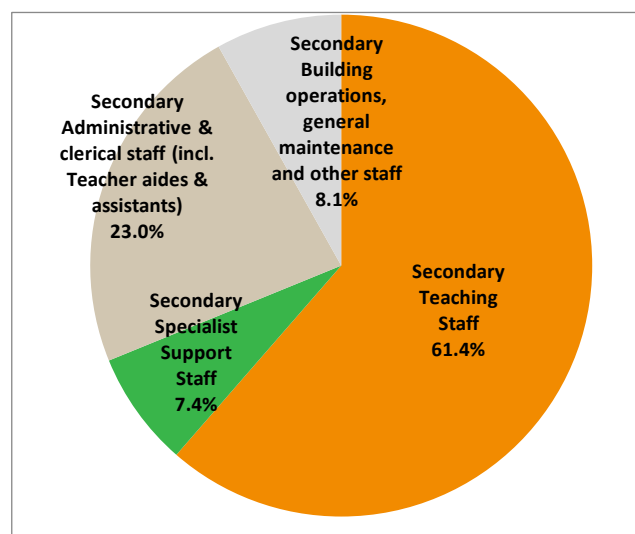


Figure 4: Queensland Independent School FTE Staff by Functional Category (Secondary), 2020



Change, 2019-2020

The number of staff employed in independent schools increased by 4.1% from 2019 to 2020. This was lower than the 4.5% growth rate experienced from 2019 to 2020 in terms of enrolments (refer Table 1).

The growth rate in staff in primary exceeded the enrolment growth rate experienced between 2019 and 2020 (3.3% growth in staff compared to a 2.5% growth in primary enrolments). Conversely, secondary staffing increased by 4.6%, lower than the growth experienced in secondary enrolments from 2019 to 2020 (6.1%).

Table 1: Number of Staff by Functional Category, 2019-2020

FUNCTIONAL CATEGORY							
	Year	Teaching Staff	Specialist Support Staff	Administrative & clerical staff (incl. Teacher aides & assistants)	Building operations, general maintenance and other staff	Total Staff (FTE)	Total Enrolments (FTE)
TOTAL	2019	9,480.7	873.3	4,624.5	1,150.2	16,128.7	124,786.9
	2020	9,864.3	1,074.5	4,442.8	1,401.2	16,782.8	130,364.3
	Growth	383.6	201.2	-181.7	251.0	654.1	5,577.4
	Growth (%)	4.0%	23.0%	-3.9%	21.8%	4.1%	4.5%
PRIMARY	2019	3,691.5	271.3	2,200.2	494.9	6,657.9	56,299.1
	2020	3,782.3	339.8	2,160.0	596.4	6,878.5	57,716.2
	Growth	90.9	68.5	-40.2	101.5	220.6	1,417.1
	Growth (%)	2.5%	25.2%	-1.8%	20.5%	3.3%	2.5%
SECONDARY	2019	5,789.2	602.0	2,424.2	655.3	9,470.8	68,487.8
	2020	6,082.0	734.7	2,282.8	804.8	9,904.3	72,648.1
	Growth	292.7	132.7	-141.5	149.5	433.5	4,160.3
	Growth (%)	5.1%	22.0%	-5.8%	22.8%	4.6%	6.1%

The highest growth rate experienced in terms of staffing was in respect of Specialist Support Staff numbers, with these numbers increasing by 23.0%. Significant growth in Specialist Support Staff was experienced in both primary and secondary, with the growth rate in primary higher than in secondary (25.2% increase in primary compared to a 22.0% increase in secondary).

Total teaching staff numbers increased by 4.0% from 2019 to 2020 (+383.6 FTE), with the number of primary FTE teaching staff increasing by 90.9 (2.5%) compared to growth of 292.7 FTE secondary teachers (5.1% increase).

The category "Building operations, general maintenance and other staff" experienced an increase of 251.0 FTE staff or a 21.8% increase in total. Primary and secondary growth in this category was similar with primary increasing by 20.5% and secondary increasing by 22.8%.

Administrative & Clerical Staff was the only staff category to experience decline from 2019 to 2020 with a decrease of 181.7 FTE staff or 3.9% in total. Secondary Administrative & Clerical Staff decreased by 141.5 or 5.8% while the decrease in primary Administrative & Clerical Staff was significantly lower (-40.2 FTE or -1.8%).

Student - Staff Ratios

The number of FTE staff in independent schools in 2020 indicate that, on average, for every 7.8 students enrolled in independent schools an additional FTE staff member was employed.

At the individual school level however, it is evident that most schools have student to staff ratios of 10 or fewer students per staff member (refer Figure 5).

If new primary students were enrolled, on average, an additional staff member was employed for every 8.4 primary students enrolled, while if new students were secondary students, an additional staff member was employed for every 7.3 secondary students enrolled.

At the individual school level, it is evident that there is greater variability in primary students to primary staff ratios than in secondary students to secondary staff ratios.

Within one standard deviation of the mean, where 68% of schools would lie, primary student to staff ratios range from 5.5 to 10.45 primary students per primary staff member, compared to secondary student to staff ratios tending to range from 4.6 to 9.0 secondary students per staff member (refer Figure 6 and Figure 7). Greatest variability in staffing ratios for both primary and secondary enrolments appear in schools with fewer than 200 students in primary and secondary year levels.

Where is Your School?

Figure 5: All Students per FTE Staff by Independent Schools by Campus, 2020

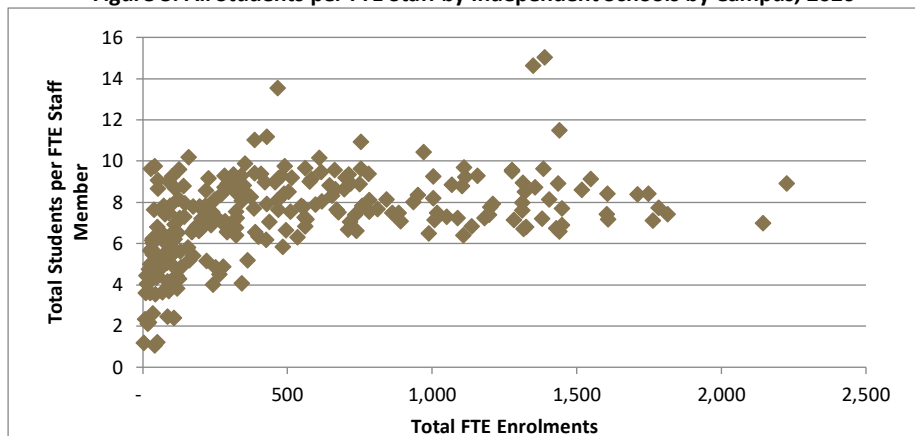


Figure 6: Primary Students per FTE Staff by Independent Schools by Campus, 2020

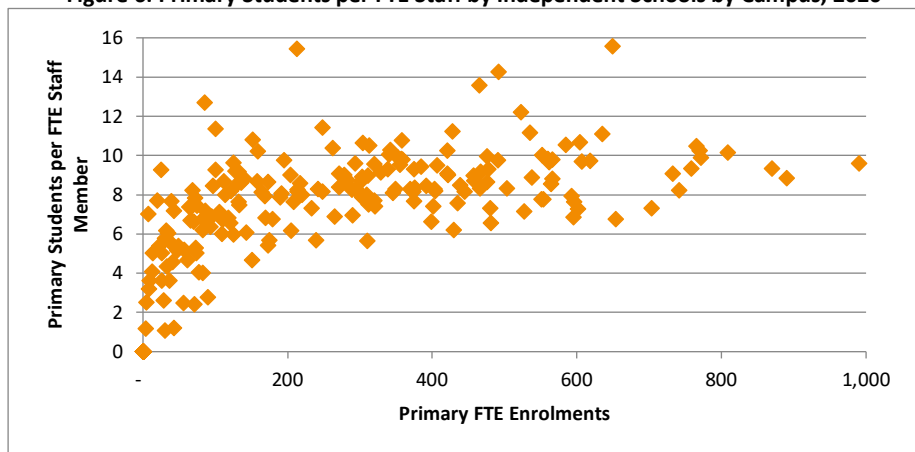
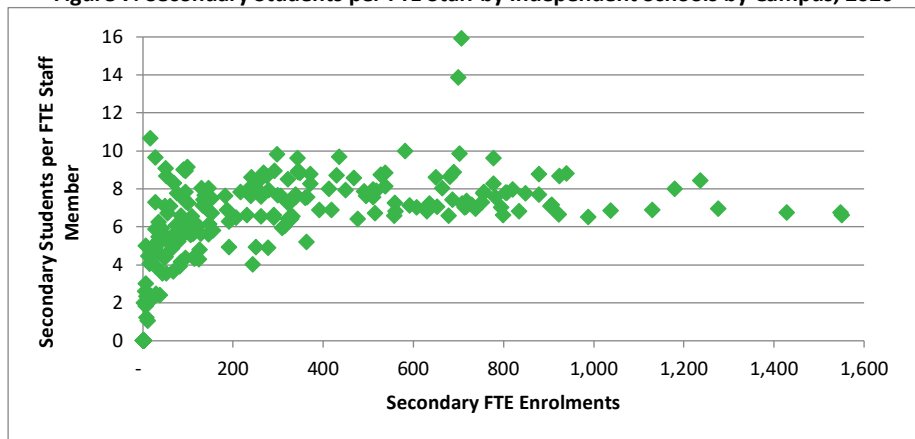


Figure 7: Secondary Students per FTE Staff by Independent Schools by Campus, 2020



Staffing, by Functional Area

Teaching Staff

Teaching staff spend the majority of their time in direct contact with students.

They support students either by direct class contact or on an individual basis, and have teaching duties, that is, are engaged to impart school curriculum. Teaching staff include principals, deputy principals and senior teachers mainly involved in administration.

Not surprisingly, student to teaching staff ratios differ depending on the type of students i.e. primary or secondary students. In Queensland independent schools in 2020, on average, there was a student-teaching staff ratio of 15.5 students in primary compared to 11.9 in secondary. This reflects different class size policies between primary and secondary Independent schools.

Figure 8 and Figure 9 identify student to teaching staff ratios for primary and secondary students for individual schools. As indicated previously, greater variability is evident in primary, with variability in ratios tending to reduce as enrolment size increases.

Most primary student to staff ratios range from 10.5 to 18.0 primary students per primary teaching staff member, compared to secondary student to staff ratios tending to range from 8.2 to 15.5 secondary students per staff member (refer Figure 8 and Figure 9). These ranges reflect ratios within one standard deviation of the mean for primary and secondary enrolment levels (i.e. 68% of ratios lie within these ranges).

Where is Your School?

Figure 8: Primary Students per FTE Primary Teaching Staff by Qld Independent Schools - by Campus 2020

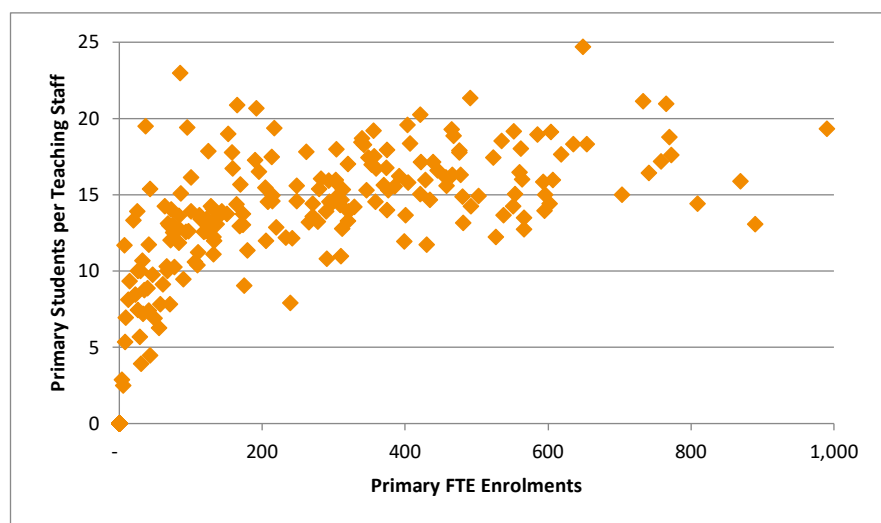
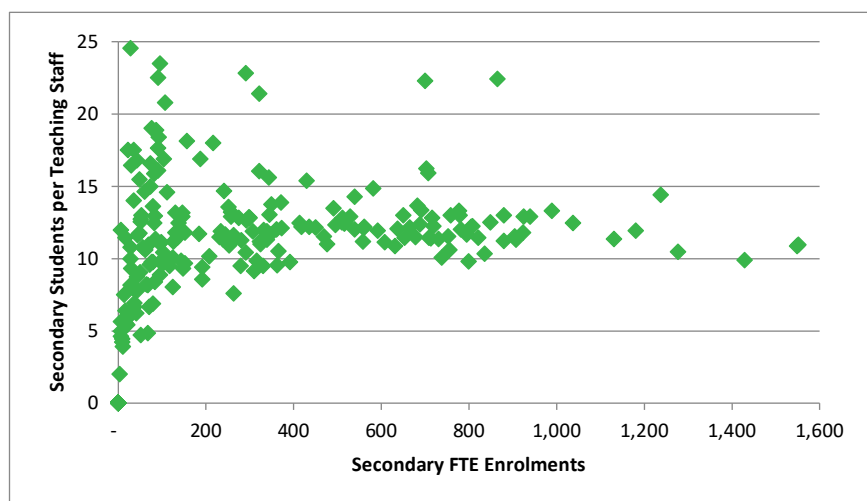


Figure 9: Secondary Students per FTE Secondary Teaching Staff - Qld Independent Schools, by Campus 2020



Specialist Support Staff

Specialist support staff undertake functions of special benefit to students or teaching staff in the development of the school curriculum. While these staff may spend the majority of their time in contact with students, they are not employed or engaged to impart the school curriculum.

Specialist support staff undertake functions in areas, or are specialists, such as:

- Student support services, such as career adviser or student counsellor or liaison officer
- Educational development, such as staff and curriculum development
- School Psychologists, Guidance Officers, Social Workers, Pathway Planning Officers, Sports Coordinator.

In 2020 there was a student- specialist support staff ratio of 169.9 students in primary compared to 98.9 students in secondary. This reflects factors such as increased specialisation in the secondary curriculum requiring more specialised support staff as well as different pastoral care needs of students at particular ages.

Where is Your School?

Figure 10: Primary Students per FTE Specialist Support Staff by Campus, 2020

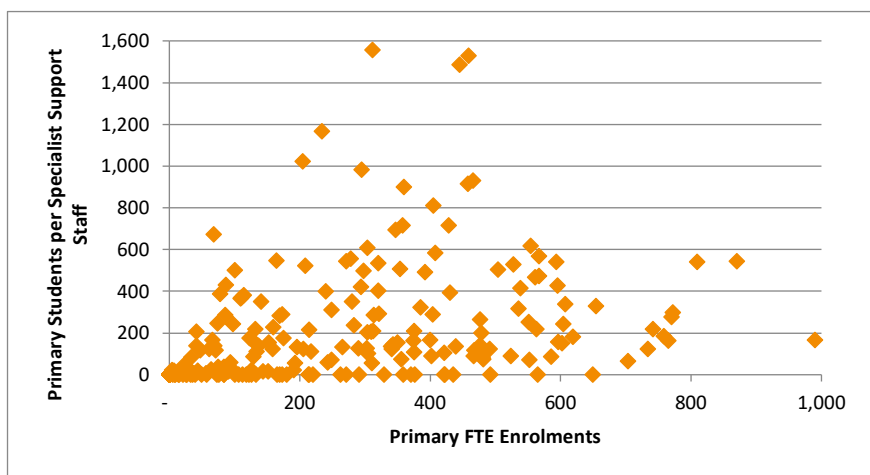


Figure 11: Secondary Students per FTE Specialist Support Staff by Campus, 2020

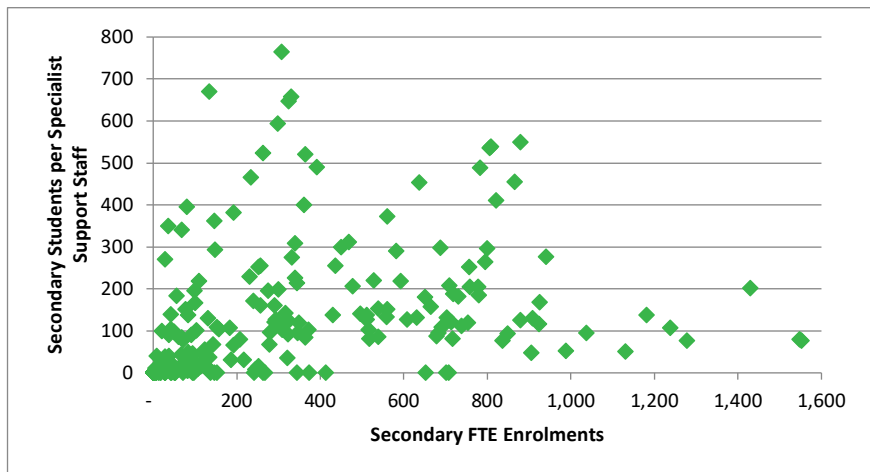


Figure 10 and Figure 11 identify student ratios for primary and secondary students for individual schools. As indicated, significant variability is evident, irrespective of school enrolment size, with a number of primary and secondary schools reporting no specialist support staff. The absence of such staff may reflect schools out-sourcing these roles.

Administrative & Clerical Staff

In 2020 the average student to administrative/clerical staff ratio in Queensland independent schools was 29.3 (i.e. in 2020 there was one administrative/clerical staff member employed for every 29.3 students enrolled in schools).

The average student to administrative/clerical staff ratio for primary was lower than the average in secondary, with a ratio of 26.7 in primary compared to a ratio of 31.8 in secondary.

Figure 12 and Figure 13 identify student ratios for primary and secondary students for individual schools. As indicated, greater variability is evident in schools with smaller primary and secondary enrolments.

Most primary student to administrative/clerical staff ratios range from 3.5 to 57.2, compared to secondary student to staff ratios tending to range from 14.4 to 52.3 secondary students per staff member (refer Figure 12 and Figure 13). These ranges reflect ratios within one standard deviation of the mean for primary and secondary enrolment levels (i.e. 68% of ratios lie within these ranges).

Where is Your School?

Figure 12: Primary Students per FTE Administrative & clerical staff (incl. Teacher aides & assistants) by Campus 2020

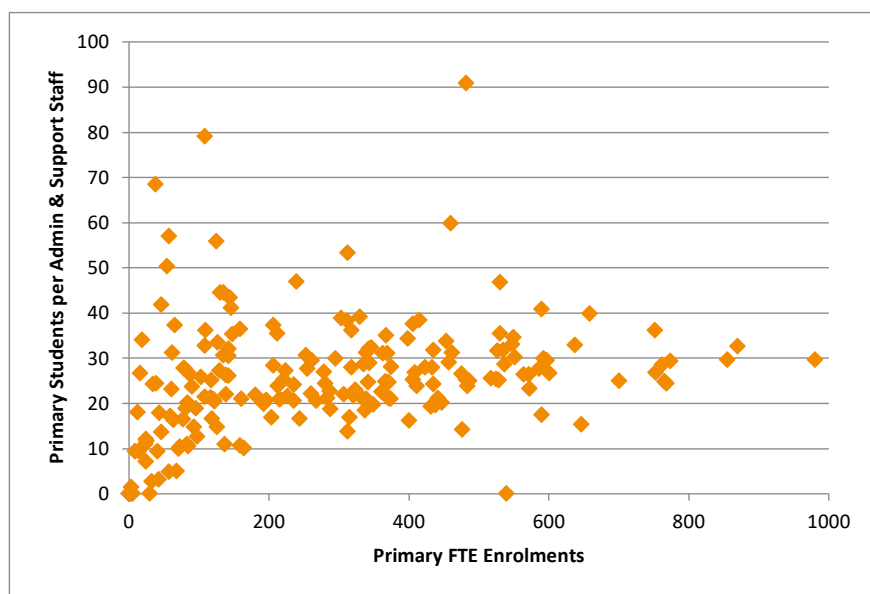
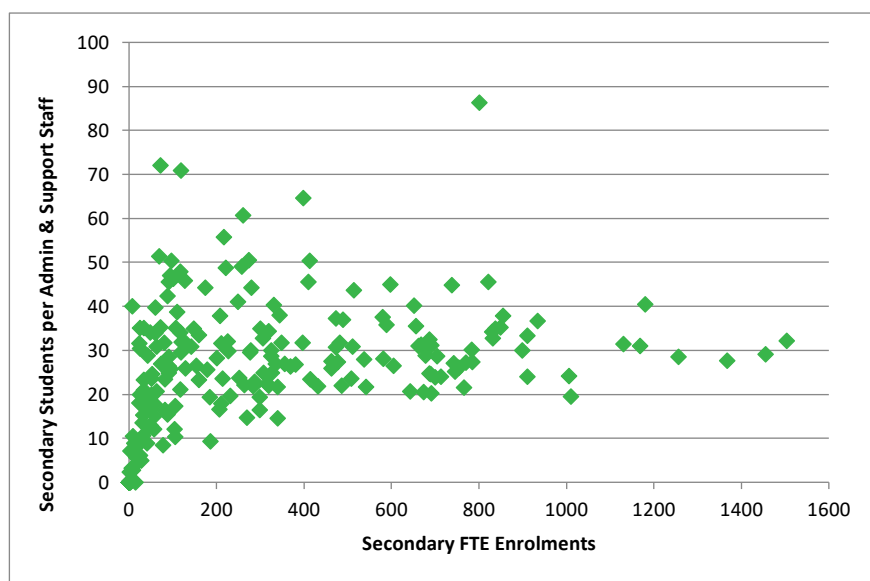


Figure 13: Secondary Students per FTE Administrative & clerical staff (incl. Teacher aides & assistants) by Campus, 2020



Change in Staffing Over Time, by Functional Area

Over time the average number of students per additional staff member employed by independent schools has reduced. In 2020, on average, one (1) additional FTE staff member was employed for every 7.8 additional students enrolled. This compares to one (1) additional FTE staff member being employed for every 8.6 additional students enrolled in 2010.

The ratio of secondary students to teaching staff has remained relatively stable over the past ten years (11.9 in 2010 and ranging from 11.7 to 11.9 from 2016 to 2020). In contrast, the ratio of primary students to teaching staff has reduced over the past ten years (refer Figure 14 and Figure 15). On average, in 2010 there were 16.7 primary students per teaching staff member. This ratio reduced to 15.3 primary students per teaching staff member from 2017 to 2020.

The greatest reduction in student to staff ratios from 2010 to 2020 has occurred in Specialist Support Staff, in both primary and secondary. Student to Specialist Support Staff in primary reduced from 290.3 to 169.9 students per Specialist Support Staff in primary, while Specialist Support Staff in secondary reduced from 194.6 to 98.9 students per Specialist Support Staff.

The ratio of secondary students to administrative & clerical staff in 2020 (31.8) is the highest in the 10 year period from 2010 to 2020. Conversely, the ratio of primary students to administrative & clerical staff has trended downward slightly, from a high of 33.0 in 2010 (refer Figure 14 and Figure 15).

Figure 14: Primary Students per FTE Staff by Functional Category, 2010-2020

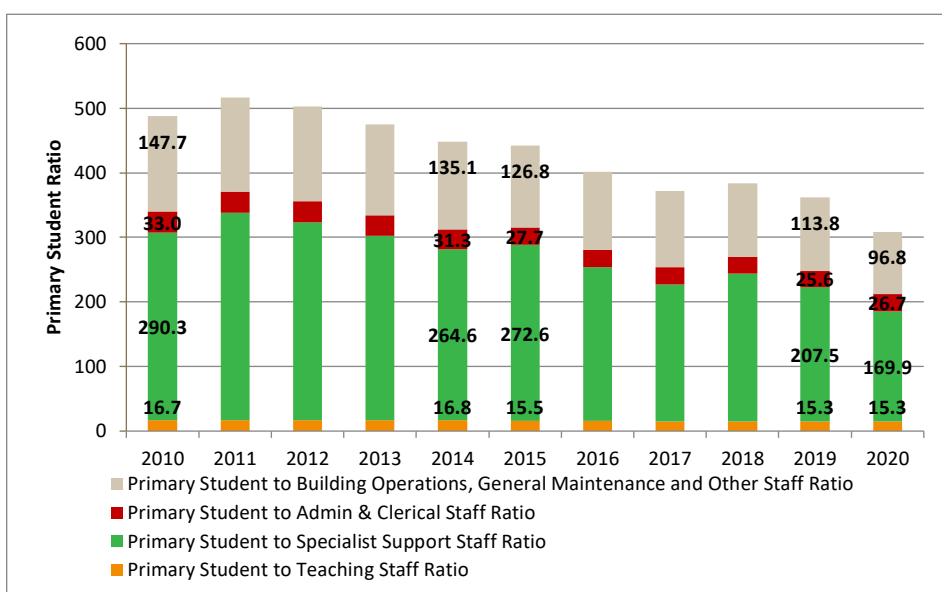
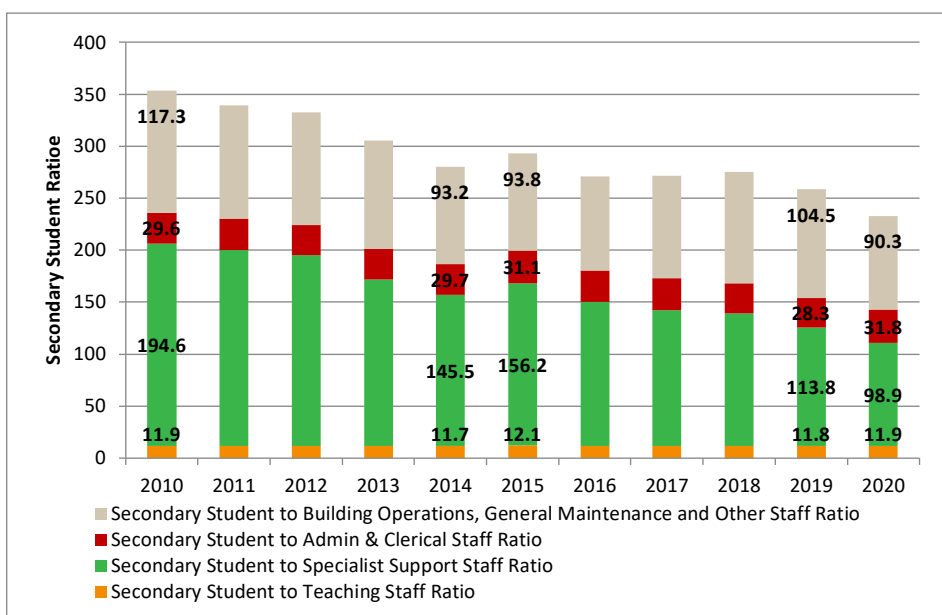


Figure 15: Secondary Students per FTE Staff by Functional Category, 2010-2020





**Independent Schools
Queensland**

choice & diversity

Snapshot

2020 Commonwealth Census