

Video transcript:

Results of 2021 Audits: Universities

Who and what we looked at

Each year, we audit Victoria's 8 public universities and the 40 entities they control. Together, these entities had almost 300,000 full-time-equivalent students and generated almost \$11.5 billion in revenue and income.

We audit each entity's financial report and report on the sector's overall audit and financial outcomes and risks to financial sustainability.

Results of our audits

For the year ending December 31 2021, we issued clear audit opinions for all 8 universities and 30 of the 40 entities they control.

This means that we conclude their financial reports are reliable.

Financial analysis

Despite the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the sector's financial performance, most universities recorded an improvement on 2020, and their balance sheets remained relatively strong.

International student enrolments continued to decline in 2021—a trend which began at the start of the pandemic. Should this trend not improve, longer-term financial risks will emerge.

Dashboard

You can explore our financial data in detail on our interactive dashboard. There, you can take a deep dive into the benchmarking information and raw data we gathered for all 8 universities from 2017 to 2021.

This dashboard lets you dissect and compare financial summaries and compositions of individual universities in different years.

Internal controls

Internal controls are the rules and activities an organisation uses to ensure it maintains proper accounts and records.

We concluded that the sector's internal controls are adequate for preparing reliable financial reports. However, we continue to find weaknesses in information technology controls at some universities.

Those universities must prioritise and address these issues quickly, particularly because the continuation of remote working and learning practices has continued to increase cybersecurity risks.

Recommendations

We made one recommendation: that all universities and the entities they control address the internal control issues we raised with them within one year and that their audit committees monitor remediation plans at least once a year.

Find out more

To explore our interactive dashboard on Victoria's public universities, head to www.audit.vic.gov.au. You can also view our full report online.

To access the complete video, please go to https://youtu.be/tGTnW_8XG5g