

Comparison between Cohorts 1 and 4 for Skilled Migrants and the Australian general population—at 18-month settlement period

Employment to population ratio:

- increased 0.8 percentage points for Skilled Migrants, from 93.2 per cent to 94.0 per cent
- increased 1.2 percentage points for the general population, from 60.7 per cent to 61.9 per cent.

With no significant change over the four years, the employment to population ratio for Skilled Migrants remained substantially higher than for the general population—32.0 percentage points higher on average over the four years.

Unemployment rate:

- unchanged for Skilled Migrants at 2.8 per cent
- decreased 0.8 percentage points for the general population, from 6.3 per cent to 5.5 per cent.

Despite the slight convergence over the four years, the unemployment rate for Skilled Migrants remained lower than for the general population—2.6 percentage points lower on average over the four years.

Median annual full-time earnings:

- increased \$2,700 per year on average for Skilled Migrants, from \$65,000 to \$73,000
- increased \$1,600 per year on average for the general population, from \$69,900 to \$76,300.³

Some caution needs to be taken in comparing the median annual full-time earnings for Skilled Migrants and the general population as the date of the data extractions do not align. Nevertheless, a degree of convergence over the four years has been observed.

Full-time employment to population ratio:

- increased 0.2 percentage points for Skilled Migrants, from 83.6 per cent to 83.7 per cent
- increased 0.7 percentage points for the general population, from 42.0 per cent to 42.7 per cent.

With no significant change over the four years, the full-time employment to population ratio for Skilled Migrants was twice that for the general population—41.2 percentage points higher on average over the four years.

³ Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2018 release, 6306.0, data presented is for May 2014 and May 2018—the closest dates to the dates the CSAM follow-up surveys were run.

Employment transitions between the six-month and 18-month stages of settlement

CSAM provides information on migrant employment transitions between the six-month and 18-month stages of settlement. This includes:

- upskilling (or deskilling)—as measured by movement from a low/semi-skilled job into a highly skilled job that requires a minimum of a Diploma level qualification (or vice versa for deskilling)
- movement into (or out of) the labour force or unemployment.

Skilled Migrants

A majority of Skilled Migrants (60.4 per cent) were in highly skilled employment at both stages of settlement, while a further 20.3 per cent remained employed in low/semi-skilled jobs (Appendix: Figure 2a).

The net rate of upskilling for all Skilled Migrants was 2.5 per cent. This was comprised of 3.6 per cent who upskilled, less 1.1 per cent who deskilled.

Consistent with the overall fall in unemployment between the two surveys, of those Skilled Migrants who were unemployed at the six-month stage of settlement, 79.7 per cent were subsequently employed at the 18-month stage of settlement—mostly in highly skilled jobs. A similar trend occurred for the 4.9 per cent of Skilled Migrants who were not in the labour force at the six-month stage of settlement, with 66.3 per cent being employed at the 18-month stage and the majority in highly skilled jobs.

Partner Migrants

Around one-in-six (17.8 per cent) Partner Migrants remained in highly skilled jobs at both stages of settlement—almost half the rate of Partner Migrants who remained in 'other' low skilled jobs (34.2 per cent). Further to this, another one-in-six (17.4 per cent) remained out of the labour force and one-in-thirty (3.1 per cent) were unemployed at both stages of settlement, compared to 1.2 per cent and 0.9 per cent respectively for Skilled Migrants (Appendix: Figure 2b).

Despite this, the outcomes for Partner Migrants do improve with an additional 12 months in Australia. One-in-nine (11.4 per cent) Partner Migrants moved from being unemployed or not in the labour force into employment by the 18-month stage of settlement, compared to 6.6 per cent moving in the opposite direction, that is, from work into either being unemployed or not in the labour force.

The rate of upskilling for these migrants was 2.1 per cent, while the rate of de-skilling was 1.1 per cent, a net gain of 1.0 percentage points. This was less than for Skilled Migrants, which was not unexpected, as Partner Migrants—not having applied on the basis of their skills and education—were less likely to have the skills and qualifications required to gain highly skilled jobs, and to transition into highly skilled work over the long-term.

Partner Migrants maintained lower levels of employment (particularly in higher skilled jobs) than Skilled Migrants. For example, more than half (55.1 per cent) of Partner Migrants were employed at both the six-month and 18-month stages of settlement, compared to seven-in-eight (85.4 per cent) for Skilled Migrants.

Occupation and industry

The follow-up survey provides detailed data at the occupation and industry level for Skilled Migrants who reported being employed at either the six-month or 18-month stages of settlement (Appendix: Table 3).

Occupation

At the 18-month stages of settlement, around half of the Skilled Migrants surveyed were working in a professional field, performing the analytical, conceptual and creative tasks that require at least a Bachelor level qualification. Around one-in-six were employed as technicians and trades workers and another one-in-seven were working as managers. Collectively, three-quarters (80.1 per cent) were working in these skilled and highly skilled fields at the 18-month stage of settlement, compared to half (50.4 per cent) for the Australian workforce.⁴ The distribution of occupation categories was largely unchanged from the six-month stage of settlement.

The main occupations for Skilled Migrants remained predominantly unchanged between the six-month and 18-month stages of settlement, and included, registered nurse; software and applications programmer; chef; accountant; and generalist medical practitioner.

The proportion of Skilled Migrants employed in their nominated occupation increased with an additional 12 months in Australia.⁵ At the 18-month stage of settlement, 74.1 per cent of the Skilled Migrant population were employed in either their nominated occupation (57.9 per cent) or in a field with an equivalent or higher level of skill (16.2 per cent). These percentages were higher than at the six-month stage of settlement, by 5.1 points, 1.8 points and 3.3 points respectively.⁶

Industry

The health care and social assistance industry remained the main employer of Skilled Migrants at both stages of settlement. There was evidence of some movement between industries over the 12 months. This included decreases in the proportion of Skilled Migrants working in accommodation and food services; professional, scientific and technical services; and retail trade (their third, second and fourth largest industries of employment respectively), while the proportion working in Other industries increased (that is, in industries not in the top five shown in Table 3).

In total, 40.6 per cent of Skilled Migrants were working in the three most popular industries at the 18-month stage of settlement. For the Australian workforce, employment was more dispersed, with its three main industries accounting for only 33.3 per cent of workers (that is, health care and social assistance, retail trade, and construction).⁴

⁴ Source: ABS, Labour Force, Australia, November 2018 release, 6291.0.55.003, data presented is for November 2017.

⁵ When applying for skilled migration, the vast majority of applicants are required to nominate an occupation that conforms to their skills and experience and appears on a skilled occupations list. These lists are aligned with different categories of skilled visas, and having a nominated occupation that matches one of these lists is essential for all but Business, Innovation and Investment visas.

⁶ Results are based on Skilled Migrants who responded to both the introductory survey and follow-up survey. Percentages may thus vary slightly from those previously reported in Table 3 of the [CSAM Cohort 4 Report Introductory Survey - 2016](#).

Migration, demographic and language characteristics

CSAM collects information on migrants' characteristics and social integration (Appendix: Tables 4 to 6). Detailed multifactor analysis is out of scope for this report, such as employment outcomes by age, English proficiency or Australian qualifications, however, some factors are examined independently, providing an indication of the richness of the CSAM dataset.

English proficiency

Despite the diversity of origin countries, 59.7 per cent of Skilled Migrants and 39.5 per cent of Partner Migrants spoke English as their main or only language at home. Additionally, the vast majority of all surveyed migrants stated that English was their 'best or only language' or they were able to speak English 'well' or 'very well', including:

- 97.9 per cent of Skilled Migrants,
- 92.7 per cent of their Migrating Unit Spouses and
- 83.2 per cent of Partner Migrants.

The higher level of English proficiency for Skilled Migrants, compared to their Migrating Unit Spouses and to Partner Migrants, was not surprising, as most Skilled Migrants were required to pass an English language test as a pre-requisite for migration. What is notable is that the reported level of English declined slightly between the six-month and 18-month stages of settlement. For example, at the six-month stage of settlement, 78.6 per cent of Skilled Migrants indicated that they spoke English 'very well' or it was their 'best or only language'; this figure had fallen to 74.0 per cent by the 18-month stage of settlement. Similarly, for Partner Migrants this fell between these two stages of settlement from 51.8 per cent to 51.1 per cent.⁷

One explanation for this is that after additional exposure to Australian ways of communicating, and through work and everyday dealings, some new migrants reassessed their English proficiency or underwent a period where they were less confident in their English ability. These was then reflected in their survey responses.

Housing

As measured at the 18-month stage of settlement, fewer Skilled Migrants owned the house they were living in than Partner Migrants, with correspondingly more renting, that is:

- owned outright—2.9 per cent compared to 8.6 per cent
- owned with mortgage—18.1 per cent compared to 33.0 per cent
- renting—75.5 per cent compared to 50.7 per cent.

⁷ Six-month figures are from the published [CSAM Cohort 4 Report Introductory Survey - 2016](#).

Highest qualifications at 18-month stage of settlement

A high level of education is typical for recently arrived Skilled Migrants and Partner Migrants, compared to the Australian population.⁸ At the 18-month stage of settlement:

- 95.7 per cent of Skilled Migrants and 76.2 per cent of Partner Migrants had a post-school qualification—compared to 59.3 per cent for the Australian population
- 78.4 per cent of Skilled Migrants and 48.0 per cent of Partner Migrants had a university degree as their highest level of education—compared to 26.0 per cent for the Australian population.
- 44.2 per cent of Skilled Migrants and 24.9 per cent of Partner Migrants had an Australian qualification as their highest qualification
- management and commerce was the most common field of post-school study for both Skilled Migrants and Partner Migrants, with 22.4 per cent and 31.1 per cent of their highest qualifications being in this field—engineering and related technologies was slightly more popular for Skilled Migrants, at 24.7 per cent.

Australian qualifications attained in last 12 months

One-in-nine (11.7 per cent) Skilled Migrants and one-in-six (16.1 per cent) Partner Migrants obtained an Australian qualification between the six-month and 18-month stages of settlement. For Skilled and Partner Migrants combined, around three-quarters (77.6 per cent) of these qualifications were at the Diploma/Certificate level. The main field of study for Australian qualifications obtained during this period was management and commerce for Skilled Migrants (22.2 per cent) and health for Partner Migrants (28.9 per cent).

⁸ Australian population is based on the 2016 Census of those not in full-time study and aged 15 years and over.

Survey methodology

About the survey

This is the second iteration of CSAM, with the first iteration run between 2009 and 2011. The current iteration commenced in 2013, and is run every 12 months. It comprises two surveys run concurrently: an **introductory survey** for migrants at the six-month stage of settlement; and a **follow-up survey** for those who had taken part in the introductory survey 12 months earlier.

The population file included migrants who settled in Australia mid-April 2016, with the eligible window approximately three-months either side of this time point, and determined differently for migrants with visas granted offshore and onshore:

- Offshore visa—date of arrival: 1 January 2016 to 31 July 2016
- Onshore visa—date of visa grant: 1 January 2016 to 31 July 2016.

The population file consisted of 71,821 sample records, which after data cleansing left 71,696 records as the population frame. The sample selection process was conducted in two stages: initially delivering 16,332 sample records across the target markets (a market being one of the six reporting categories within a state or territory); and a redistribution of surplus sample records that resulted in a sample of 20,000 records. Of these, 3179 sample records were matched to state and territory records. For further information see the [CSAM Methodology Paper](#), available on the Department's website.

Migrants with valid phone numbers (10,060) were contacted to complete a Computer Assisted Telephone Interview. A total of 8522 migrants completed the follow-up survey for Cohort 4—a response rate of 84.7 per cent.

Results in the tables and figures were weighted to help account for any discrepancies between the profile of the 20,000 migrants invited to participate in the introductory survey and the 8522 migrants completing both the introductory and follow-up surveys. This reduced the effects of any respondent bias in the data, so that results can be more easily generalised to the in-scope population.

Reporting categories used in the survey

A general understanding of the structure of Australia's permanent Migration Program is necessary to understand the results of CSAM. Australia's permanent Migration Program has two major streams:

- The **Skill stream** focuses on economic migration by facilitating the migration of people who have the skills, proven entrepreneurial capability or outstanding abilities that will contribute to the Australian economy.
- The **Family stream** enables family reunion by allowing the migration of family members such as spouses, children, parents and certain other members of extended families.

CSAM includes people from both streams of the Migration Program.

Within the Family stream, CSAM includes migrants who were granted a Partner visa, that is, those who were married, intending to marry or in a de facto relationship with an eligible Australian resident or citizen. It therefore excludes migrants on Parent, Child or other Family stream visa categories.

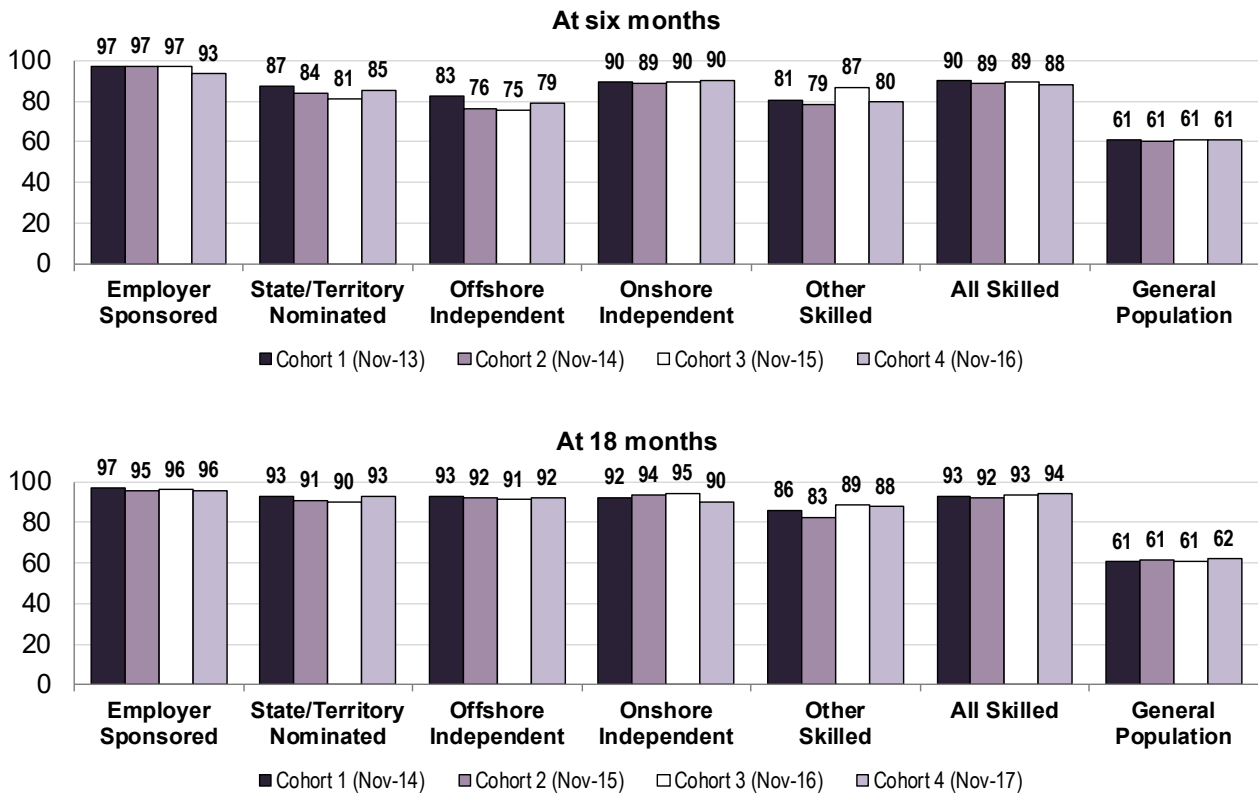
Within the Skill stream, CSAM includes migrants granted one of the following visas:

- **Employer Sponsored visa**—granted to applicants sponsored by an Australian employer to fill a genuine skilled vacancy in the employer’s business.
- **Offshore Independent visa**—granted to applicants who applied from outside of Australia, and passed a points test (based on an individual’s skills and characteristics, such as their age, English ability, qualifications and work experience).
- **Onshore Independent visa**—granted to applicants who applied from within Australia and passed a points test. As they are already in Australia on a temporary visa they may already be working at the time of application.
- **State/Territory Nominated visas**—granted to applicants nominated by a state/territory government, who passed a points test and have an occupation on that state’s/territory’s skilled occupation list.
- **Other Skilled visa**—all other visas granted through the Skill stream of the Migration Program.

Appendix: Figures and tables

Figure 1: Comparisons of employment outcomes between survey cohorts (primary applicants) and the Australian general population, by settlement period

a) Employment to population ratio (per cent)



b) Unemployment rate (per cent)

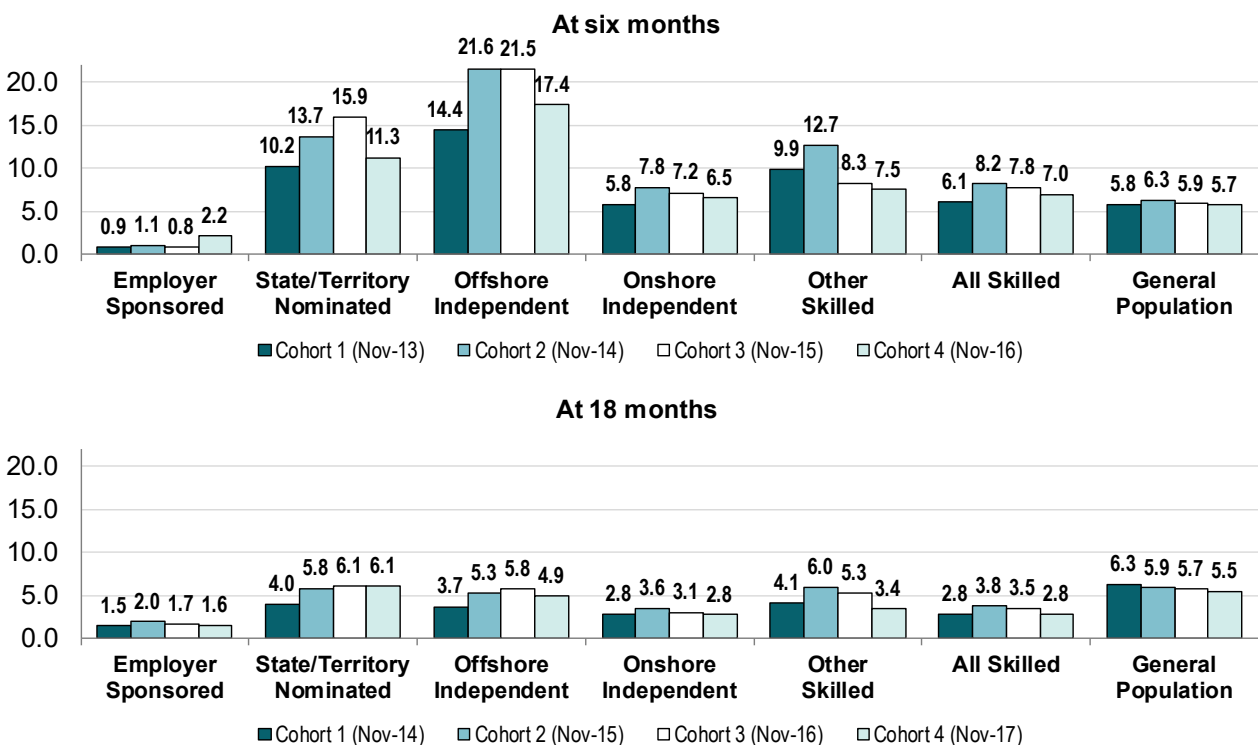
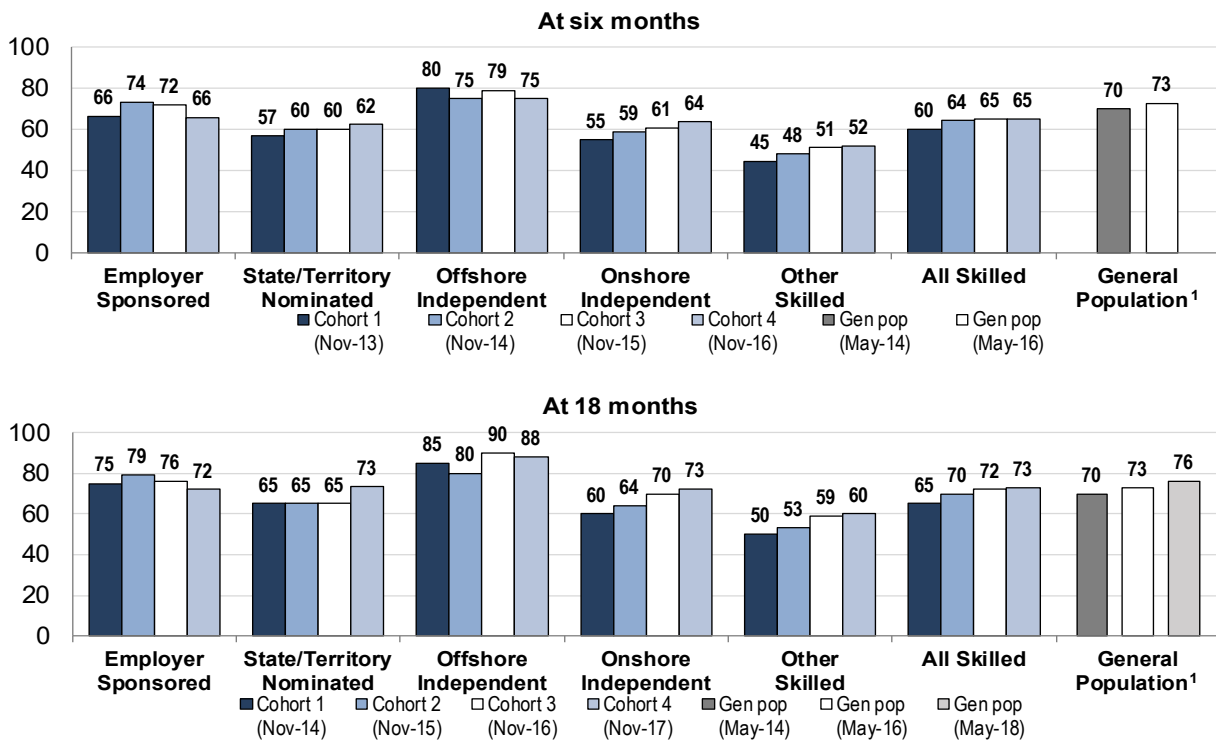


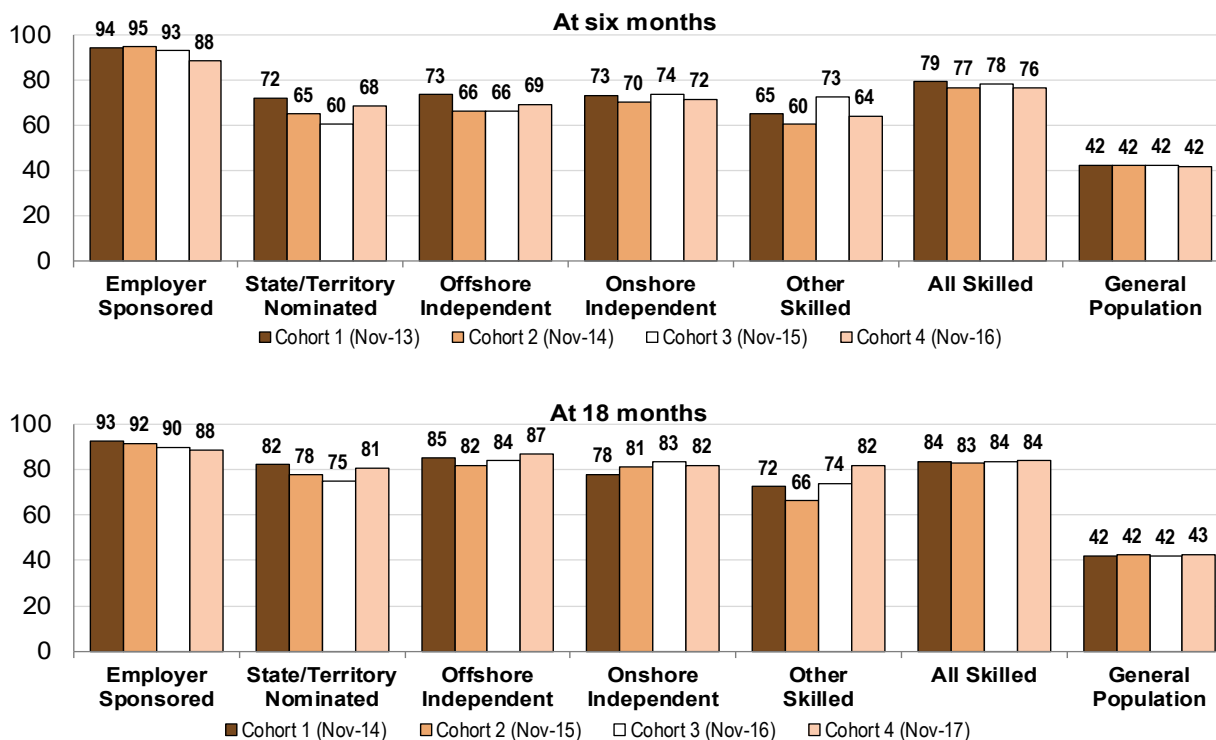
Figure 1 (continued)

c) Median full-time earnings (\$'000)



1. ABS 6306.0 Median full-time earnings data for Australian general population is a biennial release (May 2014, May 2016 and May 2018 shown).

d) Proportion in full-time work (per cent)



Note: Data reported in Figure 1 may differ slightly from that reported in other CSAM reports, due to:

- subsequent revision of introductory survey data at the time of the follow-up survey. That is, responses are confirmed with the respondents during the follow-up survey where initial employment outcomes were not reported in the introductory survey, or where there was a marked difference in income between the introductory survey and the follow-up survey.
- CSAM introductory reports include all respondents who participated in the introductory survey, whereas CSAM follow-up reports include only those respondents who participated in both the introductory and follow-up surveys.

General Pop. = General Population. Employment Outcome figures for Australian civilian population aged 15 years and over sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Labour Force, Australia, November 2018 release, 6202.0 (Trended) and November 2018 release, 6291.0.55.003. Earnings figures for Australian employees sourced from ABS, Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, May 2018 release, 6306.0. Data may vary from previous reports due to ABS revisions.

