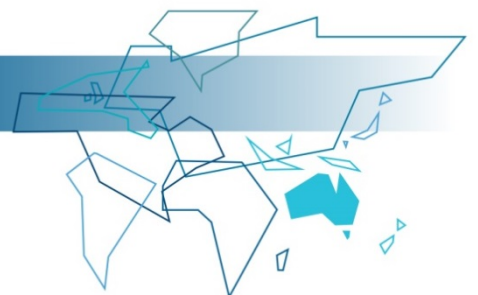




Australian Government

Draft National Strategy for International Education

For consultation
April 2015







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Minister's foreword



Over the past 50 years, Australia has openly welcomed millions of students from all over the world. We should not underestimate the profound impact this has had on Australia's economy and society, and our capacity to engage with our region and the rest of the world.

International education is a vital part of our national prosperity and critical to the Australian Government's plan to build a more diverse, world-class economy — a five-pillar economy — to unleash Australia's full economic potential. Over the past decades, despite experiencing challenges and difficulties along the way, Australia has expanded international education to become our largest services export and one of our largest exports overall. It makes a critical contribution to export activity for regional Australia and supports nearly 130,000 jobs nationally.

After several years of decline, the Government has encouraged a return to growth in international education. The number of international students studying in Australia has begun to climb and the value of international education has grown by over a billion dollars in just one year. Rising numbers of globally mobile students provide opportunities to build on this achievement.

Australia's engagement in international education benefits us well beyond being a mainstay of our economy. It generates important people-to-people links that underpin Australia's research, trade, investment and social engagement with the world. It contributes to our communities and scholarly life, building shared understandings and new perspectives. It showcases our achievements to the world, keeping us globally competitive.

We cannot lose sight of intensifying competition from the world's leading economies and emerging competition from universities and education hubs closer to home. Australia needs to meet this competition head on, with a relentless focus on quality in teaching, learning and research, to avoid being left behind. We also need to strengthen our efforts across all aspects of international education, whether this is providing better education services to more international students, building stronger institutional partnerships and research collaborations, or further expanding study abroad initiatives including through the New Colombo Plan. It is only through a broad, national approach that we will be able to realise the full potential of international education as a core element of Australia's economy and society.

Education, training, skills, research, science and innovation are at the centre of the Australian Government's efforts to position Australia for future prosperity in an increasingly globalised world. A new architecture for Australian international education will secure Australia's place as a world leader in what has become a major industry in its own right. It will ensure that international education, coupled with a strong research and innovation system, is a key driver of Australia's future economic productivity and competitiveness.

We must work together to send a clear message to students from around the world that Australia welcomes them and will help them achieve their aspirations. We must make studying in Australia and studying with Australian education institutions the best experience available anywhere in the world.

I encourage everyone with an interest in international education to participate in the development of this important national strategy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Pyne', is enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

The Hon Christopher Pyne MP
Minister for Education and Training

Consultation on the draft national strategy

The release of this draft strategy marks the beginning of consultation to ensure the final strategy represents a shared national vision and responsibility.

The Australian international education community is encouraged to provide feedback and examples of specific institutional, state and territory, and community-based initiatives that further the proposed goals.

Business leaders and employer groups are encouraged to identify opportunities to build deeper connections with the global marketplace in order to better link students to meaningful work experience.

All stakeholders are invited to address the following questions:

- Does the vision statement in the draft strategy represent Australia's aspirations for international education?
- Are any significant goals for international education not adequately covered?
- Can you identify the strategic actions which best support your goals for international education?
- What are the best measures of success?
- What are the case studies that best illustrate Australia's success? Please provide examples.
- What would you like to see progressed as a priority in the first year?

Please submit your feedback on the draft strategy online at: www.internationaleducation.gov.au by close of business **29 May 2015**.

Consultation led by Austrade on a long-term market development strategy for the international education sector, [Australian International Education 2025](#), will inform the development of the national strategy.

A vision for Australian international education

Australian international education is a core element of Australia's economic prosperity, social advancement and international standing.



Richa Singhania, Endeavour Awardee, Biological Sciences

Executive summary

Australia's place in international education

Australia is one of the most popular study destinations in the world for international students. During the past half century, we have welcomed more than 2.5 million students to study in Australia.¹ Many remain actively engaged with Australia through personal friendships and professional connections.

Australia offers an enriching and high-quality learning and living experience in higher education, vocational education and training (VET), school education and English language tuition. Many students follow an extended study pathway through a series of educational institutions. This may involve years of study in Australia, including a combination of intensive English language and school education, VET, higher education and postgraduate research. An Australian international education data snapshot is at [Appendix A](#).

Australian education institutions provide a large range of education services overseas through 31 offshore university campuses² and hundreds of partnerships across all areas of education. Australian schools also engage globally through hundreds of sister school and other partnership arrangements.

Australian education also reaches out online. From full degrees to Massive Open Online Courses, our institutions offer a broad mix of quality content and innovative presentation that raises Australia's reputation for education and research excellence.

The value of international education to Australia

International education is vital for the Australian economy. It is our largest services export, contributing \$16.3 billion to the Australian economy in 2013-14.³ It supports nearly 130,000 jobs nationally and plays a significant economic role as a source of skilled migrants, as well as skilled labour for Australian companies operating overseas. International students studying in Australia, together with visiting family and friends, also make a significant contribution to Australia's tourism industry, supporting even more jobs across our services sector.

¹ D Davis and B Mackintosh, *Making a difference: Australian international education*, Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2012, p. 92.

² Universities Australia, *Offshore programs of Australian universities*, 2014b, p. 3.

³ Australian Government, *Export income to Australia from international education activity in 2013-14*, 2014.

Australia's international education sector not only generates significant economic benefits but enriches our social, cultural and intellectual life. It plays an important role in internationalising our campuses, classrooms, workplaces and communities. Relationships developed through international education help maintain international trade, investment and goodwill. International education paves the way for Australian students, researchers and professionals to develop their capabilities for an increasingly globalised workplace.

Through signature initiatives such as the New Colombo Plan, more Australian undergraduate students will be supported to engage in our region and build the relationships that underpin future collaborations in research and business. More Australian students are also engaging at school level in an international education, as demonstrated by the steady increase in the number of Australian schools offering the International Baccalaureate since it was introduced in Australia in 1978.

The value to states, territories and regions

Through international education, states and territories extend cultural and economic relationships and drive economic growth in metropolitan areas and regional hubs. They are able to cater to different student needs in teaching and learning and in student experience. They have a strong role to play in ensuring a quality education coupled with a safe, supportive and inclusive environment.

Several states and territories have developed their own strategy or vision to grow international education. For example, Victoria and New South Wales each have prepared a comprehensive approach, including transnational education and a quality student experience. As part of its broader plan to reform the state's education and training sector, Queensland has prioritised Asia's growing middle classes as an education export opportunity. The Northern Territory has announced plans to establish the territory as an international education and training hub with a specific focus on Asia.

International education's contribution to regional Australia is critically important. Onshore and offshore education export activity provides regional Australia the opportunity to leverage its distinctive offerings. These include unique student experience, liveability and employment aspects. They also include local knowledge and expertise in areas as broad as biosecurity, agriculture, marine science and the delivery of health services in remote settings, which are priorities for many of our major education partners. Regional providers also have extensive experience in distance education and have embraced the digital provision of course content.

Some providers across higher education, VET and school education are working together on joint marketing initiatives to promote the quality education and lifestyle opportunities offered by their region. Projects such as Think Geelong bring together education institutions, tourism bodies, local government and business to collaborate on raising awareness of the broader benefits of studying in the region.

The development of Northern Australia is a key priority for the Australian Government and there are many opportunities to contribute to this through increasing international linkages in education and research. A particular area of potential is the concept of the 'tropical economy'. More than 50 per cent of the world's population is forecast to live in the tropics by 2050. Northern Australian institutions can meet the needs of tropical markets by providing expertise and partnering in areas such as mining, agriculture, fisheries management, building design, marine science, disaster management and conservation.

The importance of partnerships

Australian international education is built on a strong foundation of institutional partnerships, supported by a collaborative network of officials and industry representatives within Australia and overseas in our embassies, consulates and representative offices. Such partnerships are vital for building confidence and improving Australia's reputation for high-quality, world-class education and research. They are also important for promoting Australian professional and technical skills internationally—including in VET, which continues to play a key role in Australia's development assistance programme.

Australia's education and research partners are mainly in North America, Europe and Asia, with the United States, United Kingdom and China our top three partners for joint research publications. China and India are the top source countries for international students, with a range of southeast Asian nations also contributing to enrolments across all sectors. These countries will continue to be vitally important partners for many years to come. That said, it is important not to lose sight of the significant benefits of building relationships beyond our region, including in Latin America and the Middle East. Partnerships with our strongest education partners must also continue to evolve with the aspirations of those countries to expand their peoples' skills, research capability and educational attainment.

International competition

Education is a global enterprise. During 2000-2012, the number of tertiary students enrolled outside their country of citizenship more than doubled, from 2.1 million to 4.5 million, with an average annual growth rate of almost seven per cent. This growth is expected to continue. However, competition in all areas of education is intensifying as foreign governments and institutions invest heavily to improve their competitiveness and their student outcomes. While we have been highly successful in promoting the benefits and value of Australian qualifications, we face increasing competition from traditional and emerging international education players.

The United States, already the world's leading destination for globally mobile students, is poised to become a more active recruiter. A forecast from the United States Department of Education that domestic college enrolments will slow through to 2022 is likely to result in more institutions looking to international students to fill the additional places.⁴ After the National Association for College Admission Counselling lifted its ban on the use of education agents, an expected increase in the use of agents by United States institutions is also likely to result in more aggressive student recruitment. At the same time, at a federal level, the United States' international strategy is focused on strengthening the global competencies, including language skills, of United States students and benchmarking their performance.

Other English-speaking competitor countries—the United Kingdom, Canada and New Zealand—have released international education strategies in the past two years. These strategies focus on building the value of education as an export industry. Extensive and ongoing consultations have enabled education stakeholders in those countries to take a lead role in their development. The national governments in those countries recognise the central role of international education in long-term economic prosperity and are strongly supporting the implementation of these strategies.

⁴ICEF Monitor, *United States poised for more active student recruitment*, <http://monitor.icef.com/2014/06/united-states-poised-for-more-active-student-recruitment/>.

There are common themes across each of these plans to seize the opportunities inherent in the worldwide demand for education services. The United Kingdom, Canada and New Zealand all recognise the role of institutions in leading education export activity. They recognise the global demographic and economic trends that are helping shape the opportunities for education provision, such as an emerging middle class in Asia and Latin America and increased access to technology. All have prioritised building brand awareness, responding to emerging markets, and expanding transnational education, including by developing technology to support teaching and learning.

At a regional level, the European Commission has said it wants to ensure that Europe remains the most attractive destination for international students and that European graduates gain international skills. It has articulated a broad range of issues that are important for the internationalisation of European higher education, including the mobility of staff and students, international curricula, online learning, language learning and partnerships.

International education is a key enabler of productivity and growth for virtually every part of an economy.⁵ Other countries are recognising this and devoting resources to attracting foreign students. China, Japan and Korea have set ambitious targets while Singapore and Malaysia, as well as countries in the Middle East and in Europe, are expanding the number of courses they provide in English.

The importance of quality

The quality and reputation of Australia's education and research system as measured by international rankings will be an important factor in determining our attractiveness and competitiveness in international education. Our performance in providing world-class education will also be measured by the quality of the graduates and skilled professionals our system creates.

Producing work-ready graduates who are equipped with the tools to engage as global citizens should be a key measure of the quality of Australian education. Today's students often need to combine a qualification with relevant work experience to gain a competitive edge in the employment market. Positioning students to build their Australian qualifications into successful careers through work-integrated learning and work experience will be vital to maintaining Australia's reputation and competitiveness into the future.

Capacity for growth

Australia recognises the importance of maintaining the quality of students' living and learning experiences as increasing numbers of international students choose Australia as their international study destination.

It is also important that we continue to communicate the significant benefits of Australian international education, not simply to prospective students overseas but also to Australian students and the broader Australian community.

In order to sustain Australia's capacity to accommodate further growth, all stakeholders in Australian international education are working to raise awareness of the value that international students contribute both to our economy and to the cultural richness of our communities.

⁵ M Baghai, D Redhill, C Richardson and G Vorster, *Positioning for prosperity? Catching the next wave*, 2014, p. 36.

This awareness includes realising the many valuable business opportunities that international students bring to Australia in areas such as rental accommodation, hospitality and tourism. It also includes recognising a shared responsibility by businesses, education providers and governments to provide international students with good quality returns on their investments, ensuring they gain a high-quality education and an enriching living experience while in our country. By ensuring a proper balance between the opportunities that international students bring and our responsibilities back to them, Australia can continue to welcome growing numbers of international students into the future. Our capacity for sustainable growth is not a fixed quantity, but something to manage responsibly.

A new architecture for Australian international education

The report and recommendations of the International Education Advisory Council chaired by Mr Michael Chaney AO, *Australia—Educating Globally* (known as the Chaney report) highlighted the need for improved coordination and leadership of Australian international education.

Roundtable on international education

In recognition of the need for improved coordination and leadership, the Government will consult with education and business leaders through two roundtables in 2015 to determine a national direction for the sustainable development of international education in Australia.

A national strategy for international education

A national strategy will drive a coordinated approach to sustaining growth in Australian international education. The Australian Government is committed to finalising and implementing a national strategy in close consultation with education and business leaders and the broader international education community in Australia.

This draft strategy takes a broad view of what constitutes international education for Australia. It includes international students studying in Australia and those studying for an Australian qualification overseas, as well as the experiences of Australian students who study abroad. It includes preparing our students to engage globally through languages study in all stages of the education cycle from early childhood through to higher education. It includes the two-way movement of researchers, academics and professionals, research collaborations and institutional partnerships. It also encompasses a large range of engagement activities in all areas of education, including promoting international skills exchange, connecting learners through new technologies, internationalising curriculum and engaging with the world through alumni.

The draft strategy builds on the recommendations of the Chaney report. Australian Government responses to the report's recommendations are outlined at [Appendix C](#).

The draft strategy provides a blueprint for Australia to secure our place as a world leader in international education and sets a path for sustainable growth in Australia's largest services export. It recognises the strong alignment of Australia's domestic and international education aspirations for ongoing cultural enrichment and economic growth.

The draft strategy is structured around three broad pillars: getting the fundamentals right; reaching out to the world; and staying competitive.

Getting the fundamentals right

A strong, high-quality education and research system is fundamental to maintaining Australia's international reputation as a leading provider of education services to international students.

To be globally competitive, Australia will continue to work to create an education system that stands out as the best in the world, with some of our institutions among the very best.

To support this goal, the Australian Government will put in place education policies that encourage autonomy, competition and quality improvement and will make strategic investments in research and research infrastructure. Australian schools and vocational and higher education institutions, along with English language providers, will determine their own strategic directions and use a range of performance data and other mechanisms to drive continuous improvement and achieve excellence.

By achieving system-wide quality improvement, Australia will be in a stronger position to compete for the world's top students and researchers.

Reaching out to the world

We will build on our strong and emerging education and research partnerships to broaden international engagement and raise Australia's profile and reputation. An enhanced international profile will position Australian institutions and students to take advantage of new research collaborations and opportunities for student, researcher, academic and professional mobility.

To support this goal, the Government will take a strategic and coordinated approach to building confidence in the quality of Australian education and research. This will include using bilateral and multilateral frameworks, along with our representatives in Australian embassies, consulates and representative offices abroad, and our global network of eminent scientists and researchers.

We will also foster an international outlook among Australian students to better prepare them to engage internationally. At the same time we will build on our significant investment in attracting top students from across the globe to study, research and train in Australia.

We will reduce barriers to mobility by enhancing understanding of Australian qualifications and the Australian Qualifications Framework. We will also build lasting relationships with alumni to strengthen international partnerships.

Through these actions, we will deepen and extend the global reach of Australian education and research institutions. We will also create a more diverse range of partnerships and ensure that Australia continues to be a desirable option for more students and research collaboration partners, from more countries.

Staying competitive

We will continue to improve the quality of the educational and living experience for international students and embrace new ways to meet rising demand internationally for high-quality education services.

To support this goal, the Government will maintain competitive visa settings and strong consumer protections. Institutions and governments will work with employers to create opportunities for relevant work experience. Institutions will foster English language proficiency to ensure international students gain a higher return on their investment. Institutions will pursue innovative course development and provision, including online education services, to students outside Australia. Australia will combine efforts across the community to ensure a quality living and cultural experience for international students through access to and information on appropriate accommodation and services, and improved student and community engagement. Australian policy makers will also improve their capacity to understand trends and the new opportunities for growth.

Through actions to stay competitive in international education, we will strengthen Australia's reputation for providing a premium education experience for international students, guard against future shocks and build capacity to respond innovatively to new opportunities.



Igede Suparwata, Endeavour Awardee, Hospitality Management

Measures of success

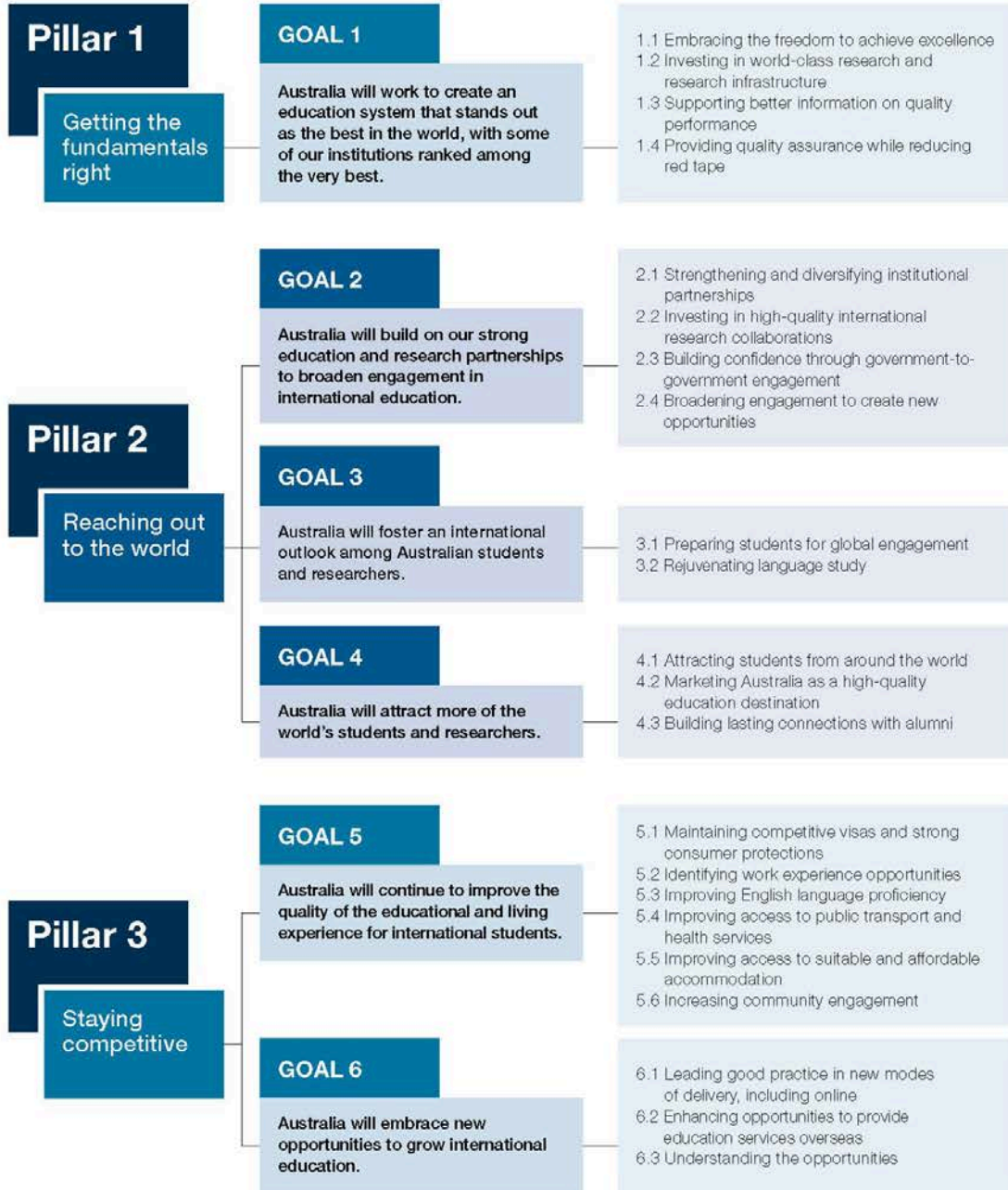
Through the actions of this strategy, Australia will:

- maintain our place as one of the top five international study destinations
- create an education system that stands out as the best in the world, as demonstrated by:
 - improved education and research performance against credible international benchmarks
 - strong levels of investment in research and research infrastructure
 - more collaboration between private firms and universities in research and development
 - greater and more informed student choice
 - reduced red tape, which benefits education and training institutions by allowing them to do what they do best—teach students and conduct research
- raise our profile as a world leader in international education and improve the global connectedness of Australians, as demonstrated by:
 - more high-quality joint research relationships and publications
 - more partnerships in emerging regions and markets, such as Latin America, the Middle East and Africa
 - increased support for student and researcher mobility
 - more Australian students studying abroad
 - more Australian students studying a language in addition to English
 - more of the world’s students and researchers undertaking study and research in Australia
 - more of the world’s students and researchers applying for Australian scholarships
 - active alumni networks are established that create diplomatic, trade, business, research and social connections between Australia and our global partners
 - alumni are engaged in meaningful activity that establishes enduring connections with Australia and each other
- improve the experience of students in Australia, as demonstrated by:
 - higher levels of satisfaction with education experiences and outcomes
 - more instances of eligible international students getting employment experience after graduation
 - higher levels of satisfaction with the cost of a range of services
 - an increased percentage of purpose-built accommodation for students relative to non-purpose-built accommodation
 - higher levels of satisfaction in the English language competency of international student graduates reported by employers
 - higher levels of satisfaction among international students in relation to the opportunities to interact with Australian students and communities
- expand the provision of Australian education and training overseas, as demonstrated by:
 - increased numbers of international students enrolling with Australian providers overseas
 - greater take-up of Australian qualifications provided through distance education and online
 - more country technical vocational education and training quality frameworks in the Asia-Pacific region using Australia’s VET quality frameworks as a reference point.

Draft strategy overview

Vision statement: Australian international education is a core element of Australia's economic prosperity, social advancement and international standing.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS





Getting the fundamentals right

A strong, high-quality education and research system is fundamental to maintaining Australia's international reputation as a leading provider of education services to international students.

Goal 1: Creating a world-class education system

To be globally competitive, Australia will continue to work to create an education system that stands out as the best in the world, with some of our institutions ranked among the very best.

Australia's education and research system is designed to meet the needs of Australian and international students and the needs of our national economy and society. Through all parts of the system we must be committed to producing the highest quality teaching, learning and research.

Strategic action 1.1

Embracing the freedom to achieve excellence

In a competitive global economy, we must continue to build an education system that provides high-quality teaching, learning and research outcomes that improve Australia's standing in international rankings. Australia's universities already compete with the world's best in a wide range of disciplines. However, in some high-profile international league tables—such as the Academic Ranking of World Universities—show Asian universities gaining ground on Australia. In order to maintain their competitiveness in a rapidly developing world, Australian institutions must have the freedom to set their own strategic directions, build on their strengths and drive excellence.

Australia's vocational education and training is well regarded, particularly its industry-directed content and nationally recognised qualification system. While there are no international comparisons that benchmark VET systems, an indication of a system's effectiveness is its ability to meet skills needs. Improving our system's capacity to produce work-ready employees, meet industry needs and lift completion rates is critical to meet the future skills needs of Australia and our global partners.

In school education performance, the latest results from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) indicate a decline across mathematics, reading and science. Students from our Asian neighbours, including Shanghai-China, Hong Kong-China, Singapore, Korea and Japan, significantly outperform Australian students.⁶ Results from the OECD Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies 2013 publication are mixed, with Australia performing above average on literacy and problem solving, but only average on numeracy.⁷ Higher levels of competency in these areas are critical to prepare a skilled workforce for the jobs of the future.

To support greater freedom to achieve excellence the Australian Government will:

- introduce reforms across Australia's higher education system that will enhance institutional autonomy, increase diversity, encourage competition and provide choice for students
- extend tuition subsidies to sub-bachelor qualifications at public universities and all accredited undergraduate courses at private universities and non-university higher education institutions registered with the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
- focus the VET system on ensuring that skills qualifications meet industry needs and streamlining governance and advisory arrangements
- work with state and territory governments, teachers and parents to focus on four key areas of school policy: providing more public schools with the independence to drive school improvement; placing greater emphasis on the professionalisation and status of the teaching profession; encouraging parental involvement in decisions that affect the education of their children; and strengthening the national curriculum to ensure it is balanced and offers students an appropriate degree of choice and diversity.

The Australian Government will continue to work with state and territory governments:

- to further develop and implement the revised framework for vocational learning and VET delivered to secondary students and set a platform to elevate the status of vocational pathways and school based apprenticeships
- with teachers and parents on school policy
- promote improved standards and curriculum design in maths and science.

The Australian Government acknowledges that Australian institutions will continue to:

- build on their strengths and drive quality in teaching and learning
- be innovative in course design, use peer review and professional accreditation to improve the quality and relevance of their courses, and showcase best practice
- capitalise on the strengths of Australian pathways programmes.

⁶ OECD, *PISA 2012 results in focus: what 15 year olds know and what they can do with what they know*, 2014, p. 5.

⁷ OECD, *Survey of adult skills first results: Australia*, 2013b, p. 1.

Strategic action 1.2

Investing in world-class research and research infrastructure

The quality of Australian research is critical to the reputation of our education system. Australia has an internationally respected research culture and produces scientific research highly cited by world standards. Our performance is particularly strong across the broad fields of medicine, veterinary science, energy, earth and planetary sciences, and engineering. However, among OECD nations, Australia has one of the lowest levels of collaboration on innovation between the private sector and higher education and public research institutions.⁸

To attract and retain the best and brightest students and researchers, we must focus investment in research on delivering outcomes that meet and exceed world standards. We must continue to invest in the highest quality fundamental and applied research and research infrastructure. We also need increased levels of private sector collaboration at the earlier stages of the research and innovation cycle to leverage the full potential of Australia's strong research and education performance.

The Australian Government encourages Australian institutions and industry to:

- make strategic investments in world-class research and research infrastructure and foster collaboration between researchers and industry in research and development.

The Australian Government will:

- provide base research funding and competitive research grants to universities, research fellowships for mid-career researchers, and targeted support for research in key priority areas
- establish a Medical Research Future Fund, with net earnings to provide a permanent revenue stream, primarily to the National Health and Medical Research Council
- invest in the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy
- improve collaboration between industry and researchers through Industry Growth Centres and the Research Connections component of the Entrepreneurs' Infrastructure Programme
- work with industry and researchers on a plan to focus the Government's investment in research, including through the Commonwealth Science Council, sharpening incentives for collaboration between research and industry, ensuring research training adequately prepares researchers, and supporting world-class research infrastructure.

The Australian Government acknowledges that state and territory governments:

- make strategic investments in high-quality research and research infrastructure
- encourage partnerships with the corporate sector and institutions in on-campus research incubators.

⁸ OECD, *OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard 2013*, 2013a, p. 127.

‘Australia has an internationally respected research culture and produces scientific research highly cited by world standards.’



The Australian National Fabrication Facility (ANFF)—a collaboration involving 19 universities and the CSIRO—is supporting breakthrough research and development using advanced micro and nano fabrication facilities. ANFF is helping to create a culture of academic and business collaboration that supports Australia’s research and innovation system.

Strategic action 1.3

Supporting better information on quality performance

Good quality, internationally benchmarked data that is publicly available plays a critical role in lifting the performance of our schools, colleges, vocational education and training institutions and universities. Robust data on teaching and learning performance and research performance is an important resource for institutions looking for areas to improve, as well as for domestic and international students and their parents wanting to make informed choices about study options.

The Australian Government encourages Australian institutions to:

- drive continuous quality improvement based on better information.

The Australian Government will:

- create new Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching by improving the existing University Experience and Graduate Destination surveys and creating a new Employer Satisfaction survey to assess the generic skills, technical skills and work readiness of higher education graduates
- publish nationally comparable data on the funding and performance of all Australian schools through the My School initiative
- support Australia's participation in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Programme for International Student Assessment
- provide up-to-date information on training courses for school leavers, students, apprentices and employers through the My Skills directory
- ensure that Australia continues to measure the quality of Australia's research against international benchmarks through the next round of the Excellence in Research Australia assessment and evaluation in 2015, with subsequent rounds every three years
- support, recognise and reward excellence and innovation in teaching and learning through a suite of grants, fellowships and awards delivered by the Office for Learning and Teaching.

State and territory governments will continue to:

- support Australia's participation in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Programme for International Student Assessment.

Strategic action 1.4

Provide quality assurance while reducing red tape

Australia must have a quality assurance framework that safeguards our reputation without impeding innovation. The framework should be fit for purpose, measurable, achievable and nationally consistent.

The Australian Government will:

- ensure that the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, the Australian Skills Quality Authority and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority are working to ensure that qualifications meet nationally consistent quality standards across all areas of our education system
- reduce the reporting and compliance burden on international education institutions and achieve better alignment with legislation that supports Australia's quality assurance framework for education
- review the Education Services for Overseas Students arrangements, including the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000, to improve the effectiveness of student protection while minimising unnecessary impacts on education institutions.

Measures of success

Creating an education system that stands out as the best in the world

- Improved education and research performance against credible international benchmarks.
- Strong levels of investment in research and research infrastructure.
- More collaboration between private firms and universities in research and development.
- Greater and more informed student choice.
- Reduced red tape, which benefits education and training institutions by allowing them to do what they do best—teach students and conduct research.

Reaching out to the world

To maintain Australia's international standing and influence, we must strengthen our partnerships, foster a global outlook in our students and build on our strengths to attract the world's top students and researchers.

Goal 2: Building on strong and emerging international partnerships

To raise Australia's profile as a world leader in education, we will build on our strong education and research partnerships and broaden engagement in international education.

International partnerships connect Australians with overseas knowledge, expertise and infrastructure to enhance quality education and research outcomes. These partnerships provide the foundations for student, researcher, academic and professional exchanges and enable access to large-scale global research funding programmes and infrastructure.

Strategic action 2.1

Strengthening and diversifying institutional partnerships

Institution-to-institution partnerships provide the foundation for Australian international education. Australian higher education and vocational education institutions and schools support a significant range of international partnership activities, including student and teacher exchanges, policy dialogues, leadership or shadowing exchanges and jointly delivered qualifications. Australian providers bring to these partnerships distinct areas of excellence in student experience and research and education capabilities. Partnerships are underpinned by a growing number of arrangements that support mobility, credit transfer, fee waivers for students and access to research grants.

Eighty per cent of Australia’s international student enrolments are from the Asia-Pacific region, enabled by strong institutional partnerships. This region will continue to be central to Australia’s business, trade and economic prosperity into the future and we must maintain our competitive advantages in this region. We must remain mindful of the evolving policies, needs and aspirations of governments and societies in the region and continue to provide educational offerings to help meet them. We should also pursue diversification through engagement in Latin America and other regions.

Institutions in northern Australia are well placed to form new partnerships in Asia. The growing number of middle-class households in Asia, their desire for a world-class education and Asia’s proximity to northern Australia all position institutions well to increase their partnerships and the number of international students they host. These partnerships help to enhance research expertise and reputations domestically and overseas and foster better educational and professional networks.

The Australian Government encourages Australian tertiary institutions to:

- establish or renew strategies for internationalisation, including in relation to institutional partnerships
- maintain and expand relationships in the Asia-Pacific region and other parts of the world for mutual benefit, including in new areas of education and research engagement
- work with governments to ensure Australia’s engagement with the Asia-Pacific region continues to evolve with the aspirations of those countries, to expand their peoples’ skills, research capability and educational attainment, and to create a regional talent pool
- extend and build new relationships in Latin America, the Middle East and Africa.

The Australian Government and state and territory governments will work with Australian schools to:

- develop more international sister school partnerships, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, based on the principles of mutual benefit and reciprocity.

Strategic action 2.2

Investing in high-quality international research collaborations

International research collaborations help Australia to access the new knowledge that exists beyond our shores and keep Australian researchers and institutions at the cutting-edge of discovery and application. Australian universities and research institutions are frequently best placed to negotiate and drive international research partnership agreements. Institutions set their own strategic priorities for research, within the context of national research priorities, and can decide on the most beneficial collaborative arrangements to suit their needs. Australia’s four learned academies and university peak bodies also play a critical role in building and maintaining Australia’s global research networks.

The Australian Government acknowledges that Australian research institutions:

- set their own strategic priorities for research, within the context of national research priorities
- drive international research partnership agreements and collaborative activities, including with emerging leaders in research and innovation
- use their strong links to the Asia-Pacific region and familiarity with Asian cultures, traditions and languages to help their Australian industry partners engage in Asia.

The Australian Government recognises the roles that Australia’s learned academies and peak university bodies play in:

- building strong links with global counterparts across all research disciplines to improve access for Australian researchers and students to global research funding programmes and infrastructure.

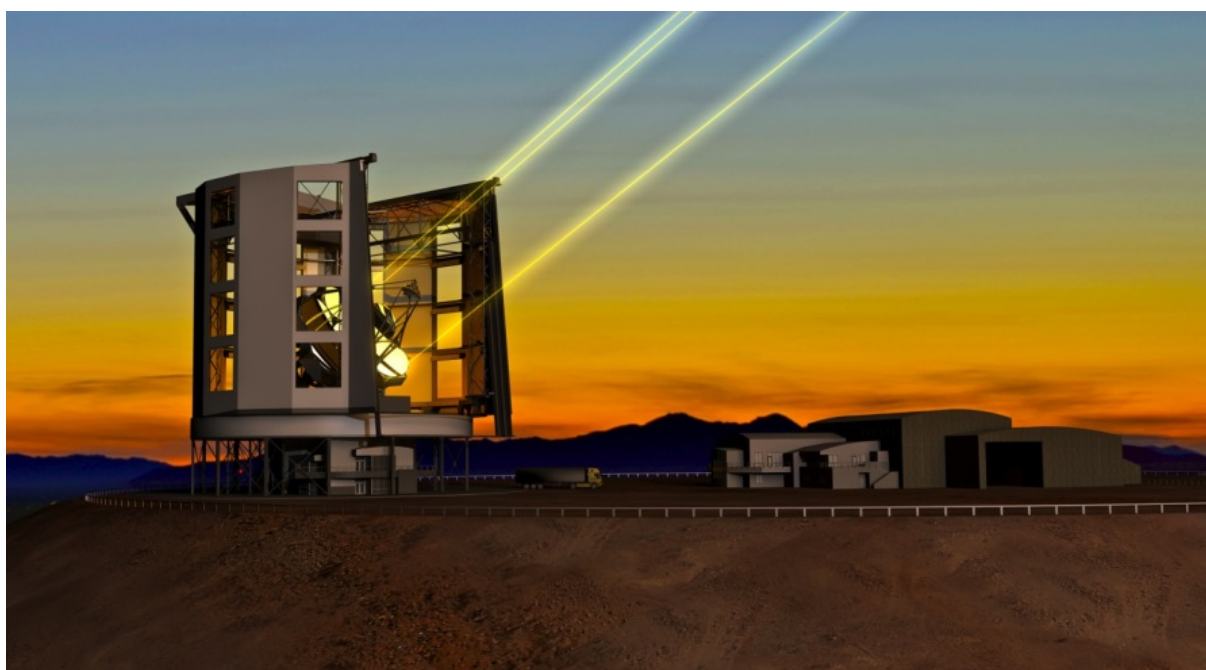
The Australian Government will:

- maintain science-focused diplomatic relationships and support research dialogues and bilateral research collaborations with key partner governments to help research networks make connections in areas of national priority
- make strategic investments in high-quality, globally-connected research, including through the Australia-India Strategic Research Fund (AISRF) and the Australia-China Science and Research Fund (ACSRF)
- ensure that competitive grants awarded through the Australian Research Council and the National Health and Medical Research Council encourage the involvement of international research partners
- encourage innovation-linked research collaboration between Australian universities, overseas research institutions and industry partners in the Asia-Pacific region, including through the AISRF, the ACSRf, the Australian Research Council’s Linkage and Industrial Transformation Research schemes and Centres of Excellence, and Austrade’s promotion of Australia’s innovation system
- nurture international research collaboration through Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships
- foster institutional links, support institutional capacity building in developing countries and support research collaboration through the Australia Awards Fellowships and Scholarships
- support research collaboration through the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research Fellowships
- support international collaboration in research and research infrastructure through the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy.



Dr Laura Bray, the inaugural recipient of Endeavour’s Prime Minister’s Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Award, is undertaking postdoctoral research at the world-class Leibniz Institute for Polymer Research in Germany. Dr Bray hopes the opportunity will be the catalyst for a world-leading career in tissue engineering.

‘International research collaborations help keep Australian researchers and institutions at the cutting edge of discovery and application.’



An international consortium of the world’s leading universities and research organisations is collaborating to unlock the mysteries of the universe, through the Giant Magellan Telescope being constructed in Chile. This is possible, in part, thanks to funding of \$88.4 million from the Australian Government, including \$23.4 million to upgrade Australian infrastructure. (Image credit: GMTO Corporation)

Strategic action 2.3

Building confidence through government-to-government engagement

The Australian Government provides active leadership to support the international engagement activities of Australian institutions, contributes to capacity building in the region, strengthens our influence and supports Australia’s economy. It pursues Australia’s interests by working with counterpart government agencies directly and through multilateral organisations, including the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Australia’s engagement includes cooperation on recognising qualifications, assuring quality, and registering and accrediting providers, as well as on student mobility and research collaboration. Continuing strong government-to-government engagement on education and research will be vital as the economies of Asia and Latin America become increasingly knowledge-based.

Australian institutions have been innovative in developing flexible pathways for domestic and international students to enter undergraduate and postgraduate study. However, these pathways are not always easily understood and recognised by foreign governments and institutions for the purposes of further study and employment. Some of Australia's key partner countries in Asia are also wary of distance education. The Government needs to build greater confidence in these areas for Australia to remain competitive as a world leader in innovative and flexible education services.

The Australian Government encourages Australian institutions to continue to:

- play a critical role in ensuring that study programmes and pathways in Australia result in qualifications that can be easily recognised and understood.

The Australian Government will:

- provide leadership in bilateral and multilateral forums to promote cooperation on recognising qualifications, assuring quality, registering and accrediting providers, promoting student mobility and research collaboration, and data sharing relating to education support programmes
- enter into partnership arrangements with other governments for productive working relationships, for example, the recent renewal of the long-standing Australia-China Arrangement on Higher Education Qualifications Recognition
- promote the APEC Higher Education Graduation Statement and the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework to support student and labour mobility by establishing frameworks and tools that foster understanding and build mutual trust in education systems, quality assurance and qualifications
- support the International Roundtable on Integrity in International Education and the Statement of Principles for the Ethical Recruitment of International Students by Education Agents and Consultants (the London statement), to promote best practice among education agents and consultants
- ensure Australia's trade negotiations produce the best possible outcomes for Australian education and training
- ensure that the Australian Government's Overseas Development Aid programme supports the Government's strategic goals in international education
- support Australia's international network of education and science counsellors to build confidence in the quality of Australia's education system and in flexible education service models, support new and existing partnerships, encourage two-way student and researcher mobility and advise Australian stakeholders about the regulatory frameworks and strategic policy objectives of their host governments
- ensure Australia's government-to-government engagement in education and research is supported by Australia's broader diplomatic corps and complements marketing and promotion by Austrade, state and territory representatives and education agents.

Strategic action 2.4

Broadening engagement to create new opportunities

As the Chaney report highlighted, it is important to respond to regions where demand for education services is growing, to maintain diversity in Australia's international student profile and build sustainable links with these regions. For example, economic development and a growing middle class are increasing demand for education services in Latin America. To support continued economic growth and address skills shortages, countries in the region are looking overseas, including to Australia, to help develop their education systems. Governments in the region are encouraging their students to study overseas, including through government-funded scholarships and student loans. Australian institutions have made the case very strongly that with greater support from government, they would be better able to realise the full potential of the significant education and research opportunities in Latin America.

In the Middle East, there are significant opportunities for greater engagement. These include in transnational education and by increasing government-to-government cooperation to attract students on government-funded scholarships to study in Australia. In particular, there are major opportunities for Australian institutions to provide education in the Gulf region.

The Australian Government welcomes Australian institutions and peak bodies continuing to:

- work with governments to attract students on foreign government-funded scholarship programmes
- participate in trade missions to emerging markets
- where appropriate, establish a presence in regions where demand for education services is growing and there are opportunities for research partnerships
- drive new partnerships with institutions in education and research.

The Australian Government will:

- identify and analyse opportunities in regions such as Latin America, the Middle East and Africa, including for Australian institutions to provide more opportunities for foreign students to undertake Australian education in their home country
- review the location of its education and science resources overseas to ensure Australian education and research institutions are supported to extend their global reach
- work to build closer education and research links in Latin America, including through the new education and science counsellor in Brasilia and Australia's wider diplomatic network
- work with counterpart governments in emerging markets to cultivate an understanding of Australia's high-quality education and training system
- work with Australian institutions to promote Australia as a high-quality study destination and to attract students on foreign government-funded scholarship programmes
- support institutions to engage by formalising bilateral education and research relationships between governments, where appropriate
- review Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships to ensure the geographic focus supports Australia's education and research bilateral and multilateral relationships.

The Australian Government welcomes state and territory governments continuing to:

- take part in trade missions to emerging markets
- establish a presence in regions where demand for education services is growing
- strengthen regional branding initiatives
- consider how to support smaller, regional education providers to cooperate in shared service hubs in new global markets.

Goal 3: Fostering an international outlook

Australia will foster an international outlook to better prepare Australian students and researchers for global engagement.

The experience of studying internationally is at the heart of creating globally aware and well-connected people. To prepare students for global engagement, it is important to provide appropriate opportunities to develop intercultural awareness and skills through the curriculum. Investing in the overseas experiences of students, researchers and education leaders also creates lasting personal links, builds language competency as a tool for future business and social partnerships, and expands institutional, research and business collaboration.

Strategic action 3.1

Preparing students for global engagement

Students across the world increasingly need to prepare for international work environments. Internationalisation of the curriculum at Australian tertiary institutions helps all students studying in Australia to develop self-reliance, people skills, general employment skills and specialist skills. In addition, studying and undertaking research and work experience abroad prepares Australian students to participate in a global economy. It provides a pathway for long-term education, research and business partnerships, and generates personal connections that provide career benefits and promote goodwill. At the same time, our students abroad contribute to Australia's reputation as an open, welcoming society and showcase our best and brightest as future business and research partners.

It is important that all Australian students can access these opportunities. For example, the Australian Government's signature New Colombo Plan promotes balance and diversity amongst Australian undergraduate students who are supported to study and gain work experience in our region. It aims to increase the number of students who have this opportunity, including across fields and universities, supporting students who otherwise may not have accessed such an opportunity.

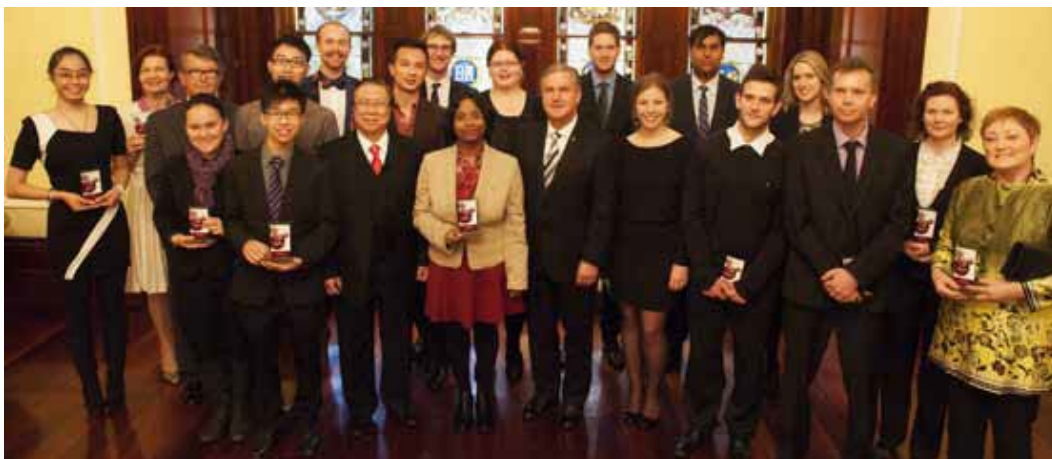
There is an important place for philanthropy in supporting the world's best education providers and students, and Australia has seen some generous contributions in recent years. Increased support for institutions from businesses, alumni and the wider community will help ensure that Australian students from a broader range of backgrounds and disciplines can study and undertake work experience abroad. The benefit for all partners lies in creating highly skilled Australian graduates that meet the future workforce and research needs of our industries and link Australia with the world.

‘Studying abroad provides a pathway for long-term education and business partnerships and generates personal connections that provide career benefits.’



Thanks to the New Colombo Plan Mobility Grants Program in 2014, students from La Trobe University visited Singapore on a nanotechnology study programme, held in conjunction with two of Singapore’s most prestigious institutions. Through experiences like this, the New Colombo Plan is increasing opportunities for Australian undergraduate students to study, gain practical experience and build professional networks in the Asia-Pacific region.

‘There is an important place for philanthropy in supporting the world’s best education providers and students.’



A long-standing partnership between the Australian Government and the Cheung Kong Group is enabling thousands of students to participate in educational exchanges between Australia and Asia. Around 250 undergraduates and 10 postgraduates benefit from the programme each year. (Photo credit: Ben Searcy Photography.)

The Australian Government acknowledges that Australian tertiary institutions:

- provide opportunities for overseas study and research, for students from a broad range of backgrounds and in a diverse range of fields
- work with businesses and the Australian Government to provide work experience opportunities for Australian students overseas
- are establishing or renewing strategies for internationalisation, including in relation to student mobility and internationalising the curriculum to assist all students studying in Australia to develop skills and perspectives that help them work, communicate and negotiate across cultures.

The Australian Government and state and territory governments will continue to work with Australian schools to:

- create and recognise opportunities for international student and teacher exchange programmes.

The Australian Government welcomes businesses, private foundations, alumni and the wider community:

- continuing to work with institutions and the Australian Government to provide work experience opportunities for Australian students overseas
- extending their support for prestigious scholarships and mobility opportunities for Australian students to undertake study, research and internships abroad
- helping to ensure Australian students from a broad range of backgrounds and disciplines can study abroad.

The Australian Government will:

- provide opportunities for Australian undergraduate students to study in the Indo-Pacific region, to raise knowledge of the region among Australians and to deepen Australia's relationships with countries across the region through the New Colombo Plan and:
 - work with businesses and other organisations to make internships a hallmark of the New Colombo Plan, giving students the opportunity to test their skills, explore career options and build professional networks across the region
 - explore ways in which private support and funds may expand the opportunities available to Australian students through the New Colombo Plan
- through Endeavour Mobility Grants, provide opportunities for undergraduate, postgraduate and VET students to undertake study and exchange in all regions, to strengthen their global knowledge and experience
- provide opportunities for Australia's most talented scholars and professionals to access learning and research opportunities overseas, increase their international awareness and nurture collaboration through Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships
- encourage more Australian students to consider offshore study experiences, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, including by raising awareness of opportunities and by working with the alumni of the New Colombo Plan and Endeavour programmes as advocates
- support bilateral scholarship initiatives, for example, the prestigious Australian-American Fulbright Commission scholarships

- provide OS-HELP loans to support students who want to study overseas and expand access to OS-HELP through higher education reforms that extend Commonwealth-supported places to more students
- support higher education institutions, through the Office for Learning and Teaching, to engage with institutions internationally on projects that innovate and improve student learning to develop global perspectives amongst graduates
- support opportunities to embed teaching and learning about global issues in the Australian Curriculum where educationally relevant.

The Australian Government recognises that state and territory governments:

- support overseas scholarship and mobility programmes for students and professionals
- support overseas immersion programmes for school students.

‘Our students abroad contribute to Australia’s reputation as an open, welcoming society .’



A visit to China has expanded the horizons of hospitality students from Melbourne Polytechnic. Using Australian Government international student mobility grants, the students went to China in 2013 and visited industry sites, such as Hangzhou Tourism Board and hotels. They also took part in Kung Fu and Chinese culture lessons. (Photo credit: Melbourne Polytechnic and Hangzhou Polytechnic staff).

Strategic action 3.2

Rejuvenating language study

Australia is one of the most successful culturally diverse societies in the world, yet there are few Australian students undertaking languages study. The proportion of Australian Year 12 students studying a language in addition to English is estimated to have dropped from 40 per cent in the 1960s to around 11 per cent in 2012.

To fully comprehend our place in the world, Australia's workforce and society needs to be competent in a range of languages. Acquiring a foreign language is a foundation skill for taking part in our global economy. Exposure to language learning in formative years is important to encourage this learning in later education.

The Australian Government recognises that Australian institutions are:

- strengthening language teaching capability, including by sharing good practice across Australian universities, offering support on models of delivery to sustain language teaching and improving professional development of early and mid-career academics.

The Australian Government will:

- introduce a comprehensive strategy to rejuvenate language study over the next five to 10 years, in all stages of the education cycle from early childhood through to higher education, including:
 - a trial of online language learning for pre-school age children that will introduce children to the sounds and concepts of foreign language through interactive, games-based learning. Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese, Indonesian, French and Arabic will be the languages used in the trial. The results of the trial will inform the potential roll-out of new innovative mobile applications (apps) to more than 400,000 pre-school aged children over time
 - continuing to develop the Australian Curriculum for languages so that all school students will have access to world-class national languages curriculum documents. The languages included in the Australian Curriculum are Arabic, Auslan (Australian Sign Language), Chinese, Classical Greek, Classical Latin, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Hindi, Korean, Modern Greek, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese
 - considering research by the Asia Education Foundation into how to encourage more secondary students to continue second language education in Years 11 and 12, to inform consideration by education ministers in 2015
 - addressing the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group recommendation that every primary school teacher has a specialisation in languages, science or mathematics by including this requirement in professional course accreditation standards
 - allocating new places for students undertaking diplomas of language to encourage more higher education students to study a second language
 - funding language training for New Colombo Plan scholars, mobility grant students and students who access OS-HELP loans to fund an overseas study experience in Asia.

The Australian Government will work with state and territory governments to:

- implement a strategy to rejuvenate language study.

Goal 4: Attracting international talent

To enhance Australia's global reputation, Australia will attract more of the world's talented students and researchers and promote Australia as a quality destination for international students.

Attracting students to undertake study and research in Australia supports partnerships for the future and showcases the quality of Australia's education system.

Strategic action 4.1

Attracting students from around the world

Australian institutions, governments, businesses and community groups fund an array of scholarships, grants and bursaries that support top students from around the world to study in Australia. In 2013, Australian institutions and the Australian Government invested almost five per cent of Australia's gross income from international education services into scholarships to support students studying here.⁹ Australian universities alone provided more than a third of a billion dollars in financial support to international students studying in Australia.

The Australia Awards Scholarships, Fellowships and Short Course programmes are an important part of the Australian Government's scholarship support, offering future leaders of developing countries the opportunity to study in Australia. They continue a long tradition of development scholarships that have been an important component of the Government's overseas aid programme, and build strong people-to-people and institutional links.

Many funding programmes aim to attract and retain students of exceptional research potential. International postgraduate research students make a significant contribution to Australia's current and future teaching and research workforce capacity, particularly in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. In 2013, 30 per cent of all postgraduate research students at Australian higher education institutions were from overseas. More than half of these students were enrolled in STEM-related courses.

This research capacity is important to regional Australia, where there are significant research competencies that are relevant to partners in our region. Recognising this, the New South Wales Government and regional universities are working together to attract higher degree international research students to regional New South Wales by promoting research-intense precincts that exist in New South Wales' major regional centres. They are also working to attract research symposia to regional areas.

Initiatives that nurture a positive view of Australia and build cultural bridges also help to attract students and researchers. Activities across the arts, education and business communities that

⁹ In 2013, when Australia gained \$15.6 billion in gross income from international education services, we invested back \$726 million in scholarships to support international students studying in Australia (\$362 million from Australian Government scholarships and \$364 million from Australian education institution scholarships).

promote Australia and focus on building stronger people-to-people linkages enhance our reputation as a welcoming place to study and research.

Students and researchers can be excellent ambassadors for Australia and generate interest in their peers in coming to Australia. This is a prime benefit of support for mobility and scholarships.

The Australian Government acknowledges that Australian tertiary institutions:

- are establishing or renewing strategies for internationalisation, including in relation to attracting international students
- support international students studying in Australia at undergraduate and postgraduate level, including in specific fields (including STEM) and areas of institutional excellence
- use initiatives that build cultural understandings and stronger relationships as a platform for academic and research collaboration.

The Australian Government and state and territory governments will continue to work with Australian schools to:

- create opportunities for international exchange programmes.

The Australian Government welcomes businesses, private foundations, alumni and the wider community continuing to:

- provide prestigious scholarships and education infrastructure to attract high-quality international students and researchers to Australia
- support initiatives that build cultural understandings and stronger relationships, and provide a platform for academic, research and business collaboration.

The Australian Government will:

- support international postgraduate research students through the International Postgraduate Research Scholarships and Australian Postgraduate Awards
- stimulate high-calibre research collaboration and professional learning through Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships
- review Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships to ensure it is attracting the best and brightest and helping to meet the Government's international education and research priorities
- provide awards for future leaders of developing countries to study in Australia through the Australia Awards Scholarships and Fellowships programme
- support initiatives that build cultural understandings and stronger relationships, and provide a platform for academic and research collaboration, such as the Australia-Indonesia Centre in Australia and the global network of Australian Studies Centres.

The Australian Government recognises that state and territory governments:

- offer scholarships to attract high-quality international students and researchers to Australia.

Strategic action 4.2

Marketing Australia as a high-quality education destination

For many decades, Australian institutions have successfully marketed Australia as a safe, welcoming and high-quality study destination. These marketing efforts have also considered the diversity of the international student population and the importance of alumni relationships for effective engagement with prospective students and their families. Encouraging greater diversity of the international student population at institutions by home country and course of study was a common theme raised by stakeholders in consultations for the Chaney report.

Australian institutions have been pioneers in profiling our education services with creativity and flexibility, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. For example, many universities now have sophisticated human resources arrangements including teams for international and domestic marketing, admissions, graduations and alumni activities, who work together to coordinate and strengthen their efforts. VET providers have successfully highlighted the value of pathway programmes and Australian school curriculum has been developed for students overseas, for example, the Victorian Certificate of Education.

Education agents play an important role and are often the first point of contact between students and Australian education institutions. They are influential in a student's choice of study destination and often act as a trusted advocate. Agents working in-country identify prospective students, give them information about providers and their courses, and assist with enrolment and administrative matters for the duration of study.

The Australian Government welcomes Australian institutions and schools continuing to:

- work with the Australian Government to coordinate national marketing and promotion strategies that promote Australia as a safe, welcoming and high-quality destination, including by participating in trade missions and international conferences
- strengthen institutional branding initiatives and identify priority markets
- ensure that education agents operating on their behalf act with integrity.

The Australian Government will:

- through Austrade, develop a long-term market development plan
- work with institutions and state and territory governments to coordinate national marketing and promotion strategies, such as Future Unlimited
- through Austrade's Market Information Package, provide market research and intelligence that helps inform the strategic directions of institutions, including analysis of markets to support increased diversification of Australia's international education services
- undertake an annual survey of education agents, to better understand the impact of Australia's marketing activities
- support research into the development of an industry-driven quality assurance system and a code of ethics for education agents linked to an accreditation mechanism.

The Australian Government welcomes state and territory governments continuing to:

- work with the Australian Government and institutions to coordinate national marketing and promotion strategies that promote Australia as a safe, welcoming and high-quality destination, including by participating in trade missions and international conferences
- promote the benefits of studying in each state or territory, such as lifestyle, employment and cultural opportunities, and strengthen regional branding initiatives that promote the rewarding environment provided by regional areas
- identify priority markets.

‘Australian institutions have been pioneers in profiling our education services with creativity and flexibility, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.’



Education and training delegates discuss opportunities for Australian international education providers in China. Education and training was a feature of Australia Week in China 2014, an initiative led by the Prime Minister to enhance Australia’s trade, investment, education and tourism engagement with China.

Strategic action 4.3

Building lasting connections with alumni

There are an estimated 2.5 million foreign alumni of Australian institutions, some 1.1 million of whom studied at universities, from the period 1950 to 2012.¹⁰ This includes tens of thousands of international students who have studied in Australia on institutional scholarships and on government-funded scholarships such as the original Colombo Plan (now known as the Australia Awards Scholarships), Fulbright Scholarships and Endeavour Scholarships and Fellowships. There are also many graduates who have studied in Australia on their own governments' scholarships.

Lifelong personal links established through alumni networks foster strong diplomatic, trade, business, research and social connections. Students returning to their home countries with positive experiences of living, studying and working in Australia, and with enduring personal and professional relationships, help strengthen broader relationships between Australia and the world. Many of these alumni now hold influential roles in government or business throughout the world and play a key role in strengthening Australia's reputation and relationships internationally. Similarly, a globally engaged community of Australian students and professionals who have studied or researched overseas helps foster international perspectives within Australia.

The Australian Government encourages Australian institutions and businesses to:

- work together and with governments to identify ways to make our alumni networks even stronger and more connected.

The Australian Government will:

- facilitate the development and implementation of a whole-of-government alumni engagement strategy in collaboration with government and tertiary institution partners
- build on the success of existing programmes and provide high-level direction to strengthen collective efforts towards Australia's diplomatic, trade, investment, international education and research interests
- support targeted alumni activities at overseas posts to effectively engage alumni
- support deep and lasting engagement with New Colombo Plan, Colombo Plan, Australia Awards and Endeavour alumni as ambassadors for Australia, to promote enduring ties between Australia, the Asia-Pacific region and other parts of the world
- develop the Australian Global Alumni Network, an online social networking site, to promote ongoing connections between alumni, current scholarship holders and institutions
- consider ways for international students to share personal and professional information while studying in Australia, so that new students have a more positive experience and are part of strong networks.

The Australian Government welcomes state and territory governments continuing to:

- consider ways to strengthen engagement with alumni and forge stronger links to cultural and business activities.

¹⁰ D Davis and B Mackintosh, *Making a difference: Australian international education*, Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2012, p. 94.

Measures of success

Raising Australia's profile as a world leader in international education and improving the global connectedness of Australians

- More high-quality joint research relationships and publications.
- More partnerships in emerging regions and markets, such as Latin America, the Middle East and Africa.
- Increased support for student and researcher mobility.
- More Australian students studying abroad.
- More Australian students studying a language in addition to English.
- More of the world's students and researchers undertaking study and research in Australia.
- More of the world's students and researchers applying for Australian scholarships.
- Active alumni networks are established that create diplomatic, trade, business, research and social connections between Australia and our global partners.
- Alumni are engaged in meaningful activity that establishes enduring connections with Australia and each other.





Staying competitive

Australia will stay competitive in international education by continuing to deliver a high-quality student experience and harnessing the new opportunities for growth in international education, including those presented by new technologies.

Goal 5: Ensuring a positive and rewarding student experience

To build on Australia's competitive advantages, we will continue to improve the quality of the educational and living experience for international students.

For Australia to remain an attractive study destination for international students, studying here must be accessible, safe and a bridge to deeper cultural exchange. We must also provide a rewarding student experience that leads to good graduate outcomes. Australia's visa settings must be competitive and attract genuine students to study in Australia, while maintaining immigration integrity. We must maintain effective consumer protections for international students. Australia's cities and towns are welcoming so that students feel connected to where they study and live.

Strategic action 5.1

Maintaining competitive visas and strong consumer protections

Australia's student visa programme plays a role in making Australia an attractive study destination. Our visa policy settings help maximise graduate outcomes by enabling international students to combine their Australian qualification with work experience. They provide for work-integrated learning and employment opportunities while undertaking study. In addition, many student visa holders are able to undertake further temporary work experience following graduation, from 18 months to four years duration, depending on the level of their qualification.

With their Australian qualification, English language skills and local work experience, international students are often a desirable potential source of skilled labour and can make a significant contribution to Australia's economy. In regional Australia, institutions are well positioned to provide opportunities for international students in disciplines that are not necessarily in demand from domestic students but that could enable graduates to potentially meet skills needs in the regions. Australia also welcomes researchers and academics looking to visit Australia on a temporary basis to conduct or observe research as a visiting academic, teach or participate in a professional development program.

To maintain the competitiveness of Australia's student visa programme, there are mechanisms in place that preserve the integrity of the system while removing barriers for prospective student applicants. The Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE) requirement is a critical integrity measure to ensure that only genuine applicants are granted a student visa. The ongoing *Future Directions for Streamlined Visa Processing* consultation will consider opportunities to enhance existing arrangements and is expected to build upon recent changes that have simplified and streamlined the visa process for genuine students.

Australia also has legislated protections for international students that exceed those provided by other host nations. The *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (ESOS) framework, including the Tuition Protection Service and the National Code, protects international students and Australia's reputation for quality education.

The Fair Work Ombudsman plays an important role in ensuring workers' rights are protected and enforced fairly in Australia. The Government provides detailed information for international students about workers' rights on the Study in Australia website, which includes a link to the Fair Work Ombudsman website.

Australia's Disability Standards for Education 2005 under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* seek to ensure that students with disability can access and participate in education on the same basis as other students. They apply to government and non-government providers in all education sectors. The Standards ensure that international students with a disability have the same high-quality experience in terms of enrolment, participation, curriculum and support services as students without a disability.

The *Principles to promote and protect the human rights of international students* released by the Australian Human Rights Commission identify the key human rights considerations to ensure that international students who choose Australia as an education destination have a safe, positive and productive stay.

The Australian Government supports Australian institutions continuing to:

- fulfil their obligations under streamlined visa processing arrangements, the ESOS framework and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

The Australian Government will:

- ensure Australia's student visa programme remains competitive, including through the Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Future Directions for Streamlined Visa Processing review and examination by the Productivity Commission of the policy settings associated with student visas and their effect on Australia's exports of international education services
- ensure Australia's visa programme enables overseas researchers and academics to undertake research, teaching and professional development in Australia
- work with state and territory governments to protect international students and Australia's reputation for quality through the ESOS framework
- review the ESOS framework to consider how it can work more effectively with current domestic quality assurance processes with the aim of decreasing the level of government burden on institutions while better supporting the needs and interests of students
- review the Disability Standards for Education in 2015.

The Australian Government will continue to work with state and territory governments to:

- protect international students and Australia's reputation for quality through the ESOS framework.

Strategic action 5.2

Identifying work experience opportunities

Australia's reputation for providing high-quality, world-class education rests on the quality and employability of our graduates. Work-integrated learning is an integral part of producing work-ready graduates. Strong competition among graduates for entry-level positions around the globe makes work-integrated learning even more important. Opportunities to develop entrepreneurship skills are also important.

Increasingly, international students view work experience as an essential element of studying abroad. The *International graduate outcomes and employer perceptions* survey found that more than half of the international higher education and VET graduates working in the same field as their studies nominated relevant work experience as a factor that helped them get a job.¹¹ Some factors limiting international student participation in work experience include English language competency, limited local networks and misconceptions among some international students about the importance of work experience. Some stakeholders have also reported that employers are uncertain about whether international graduates are eligible to work in Australia.

Australia's post-study work arrangements also support meaningful employment experiences for international students after study. Arrangements should continue to allow students to seek valuable work opportunities in an English-speaking environment upon completion of their studies.

¹¹ Australian Government, *International graduate outcomes and employer perceptions*, 2010, p. 7.

The Australian Government acknowledges that Australian institutions and education peak bodies are:

- providing important on-campus career advice services and are improving these services, including based on international examples of best practice
- working with employers and peak business and industry bodies to expand the potential, scale and breadth of relevant work-integrated learning opportunities for international students and graduates, including through the National Strategy for Work-Integrated Learning in University Education
- working with the Australian Government to provide information about work eligibility to employers to help promote the employment of international graduates to Australian businesses and industry
- working with governments and others to ensure international students are well informed of their work rights under Australian law
- reinforcing with international students early in their study the importance of developing the skills and competencies that employers are seeking and promote the benefits of work experience.

The Australian Government encourages Australian employers and peak business and industry bodies to continue to:

- work with institutions to expand the potential, scale and breadth of relevant work-integrated learning opportunities for international students and graduates.

The Australian Government will:

- work with institutions to provide information about the work eligibility of international students and graduates to build employer awareness of the benefits of engaging international students in their organisations and help promote their employment
- gain a better understanding of the factors preventing students from participating in work experience programmes and post-study work arrangements
- work with institutions to keep international students well informed of their work rights under Australian law
- ensure Australia's visa settings enable international students to gain valuable work experience both during and after study.

The Australian Government acknowledges that state and territory governments will continue to:

- work with institutions and employers to create work experience opportunities for international students and build awareness among employers of the benefits of engaging international students
- work with institutions to understand and address any barriers to international students undertaking work placements in rural or regional Australia
- work with institutions and businesses to support the development of entrepreneurship skills in international students to help with their future employability.

Strategic action 5.3

Improving English language proficiency

Australia's position as one of the world's top three English-speaking study destinations is built in large part on our advantage as an English-speaking nation in close proximity to Asia. Employers across Asia and in Latin America place great value on the English language proficiency of graduates, as English is perceived globally as the new *lingua franca*.¹² There is also evidence to suggest that English language competency helps overseas graduates successfully transition into the domestic labour market.¹³ However, Australian employers have identified a need to improve the English language competency and communication skills of the overseas graduates they employ.¹⁴

Australia must ensure that all international students develop, maintain and have the opportunity to improve their English language proficiency throughout their study. While international students need to demonstrate a suitable level of English language proficiency when they begin their study, there are concerns that they do not always maintain this proficiency throughout their study. English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) institutions are important in improving the English language competency of international students. The *ELICOS National Standards* ensure English language institutions meet and maintain high standards.

The Australian Government recognises that Australian institutions:

- support international students to improve their English language proficiency throughout their study, including helping them develop professional workplace English to prepare them for work experience and employment opportunities.

The Australian Government is:

- reviewing, in consultation with ELICOS institutions, the ELICOS National Standards as part of the ESOS review.

The Australian Government encourages international students to:

- be aware of the long-term benefits of taking personal responsibility for maintaining and improving their English language skills.

Strategic action 5.4

Improving access to public transport and health services

Ensuring equal access nationally to public transport concessions improves Australia's reputation as a welcoming and friendly country that values students from overseas. Providing students with public transport concessions lowers students' transport costs and helps alleviate cost of living pressures. Concessions also open up suitable and affordable accommodation options that students may not have considered previously, by reducing the cost of travelling from these accommodation options to education institutions.

¹² P Rigg, *English as the lingua franca of higher education?*, www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20131121152245865.

¹³ L Hawthorne and A To, "Australian employer response to the study-migration pathway: the quantitative evidence 2007-2011," *International Migration*, 52, no. 3, 2014, S Robertson, L Hoare and A Harwood, "Returnees, student-migrants and second chance learners: case studies of positional and transformative outcomes of Australian international education," *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 2011.

¹⁴ Australian Government, *International graduate outcomes and employer perceptions*, 2010, pp. 15-16.

Most state and territory governments already provide international students with transport concessions equal to those available to domestic students. The New South Wales Government's decision in October 2012 to offer some public transport concessions to international students has been welcomed as a significant step forward. The Victorian Government is undertaking a trial of discounted public transport for international tertiary students whose education institutions opt into the scheme, for three years from 2015.

Australia also ensures that international students can access medical treatment while studying here by requiring international student visa holders to have Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). This insurance cover means that international students are considered to be private, not public patients. To avoid misunderstandings, students must have clear information on the level of access to health services supported by their health insurance.

The Australian Government recognises that Australian institutions will continue to:

- provide information about health insurance to international students
- assist international students to understand options for commuting in regional areas where public transport may be restricted.

The Australian Government will:

- work with education agents, institutions, the Council of International Students Australia and foreign governments to help students studying in Australia understand core elements of OSHC and related visa requirements.

The Australian Government encourages state and territory governments to:

- consider ways to improve access to public transport concessions for international students, where international students do not have transport concessions equal to those available to domestic students
- continue to provide general information about health insurance to international students.

Strategic action 5.5

Improving access to suitable and affordable accommodation

Access to suitable and affordable accommodation is a high priority for international students. While a recent survey found that about 84 per cent of international students studying in Australia were satisfied with the quality of their accommodation, and more than 85 per cent were satisfied with access to accommodation, only 51 per cent of respondents were satisfied with the cost.¹⁵ This response reflected the exchange rate at the time (2012). Prices in the private rental market are likely to rise and existing accommodation in Australia will come under more pressure as overall student numbers grow.

Research indicates that students living on campus in accommodation designed for students perform better than their peers who live off campus.¹⁶ Purpose-built student accommodation on or near campus provides a well-rounded education experience for both domestic and international students. As the Chaney report found, it can also contribute to safe living environments for students.

¹⁵ Australian Government, *International higher education satisfaction with accommodation in Australia*, 2013, p. v.

¹⁶ R López Turley and G Wodtke, "College residence and academic performance: who benefits from living on campus?," *Urban Education*, 45, no. 4, 2010.

Other benefits include convenience, access to extracurricular activities, opportunities to develop lifelong friendships and opportunities to learn about other cultures and lifestyles. Australia needs to increase student housing on or near campus to provide more of the quality student and living environment inherent in a 'college' style academic experience.

A recent census of purpose-built university student accommodation (supported by the Australian Government) found that approximately 13 per cent of international university students were staying in such purpose-built accommodation, while the remainder found other options in Australia's private rental market. Outside of the higher education sector, the availability of purpose-built accommodation for VET students is rare, the use of 'homestay' boarding with Australian families is a popular option for many ELICOS and school students and some international school students may also stay in purpose-built student accommodation where schools offer this option. Nonetheless, it is clear that the large majority of international students across all education sectors find accommodation in Australia's private rental market.

Many already receive assistance in finding suitable quality accommodation on arrival via support services offered through their education provider. Information and support services need to be made available to students at this local level, while national-level information is also useful to prospective students who are still deciding on their preferred study destination.

The Australian Government encourages Australian tertiary institutions to:

- continue to provide international students with up-to-date information about the housing market, including key information about renting in the private market
- work with investors, property developers, education peak bodies, students and governments to investigate ways to improve the availability, affordability and quality of accommodation, including increasing purpose-built student accommodation on or near campus.

The Australian Government will work with institutions, education peak bodies and state and territory governments to:

- investigate ways to establish a consistent quality ratings model for student accommodation that may help international students choose an option that is most suitable for them and their budget
- investigate ways to improve student accommodation, including by benchmarking the policies, services and affordability of competitor countries, analysing accommodation challenges and solutions in Australian capital cities and regional communities, and investigating planning incentives for property developers to invest in new infrastructure.

The Australian Government and state and territory governments will work with schools to:

- consider options for increasing purpose-built student accommodation on or near campus
- ensure that accommodation for international students under 18, including homestay, is appropriate and offers adequate support.

The Australian Government encourages businesses to:

- consider options for increasing purpose-built student accommodation and other business opportunities for providing affordable, quality accommodation for international students.

‘Research indicates that students living on campus in accommodation designed for students perform better than their peers who live off campus.’



The innovative iGrow programme at International House Darwin, an on campus student residence at Charles Darwin University, helps international students fulfil their potential in five key areas of student development: professional experience, academic development, personal wellbeing, location (learning about Darwin and the surrounding area) and cultural experience.

Strategic action 5.6 Increasing community engagement

An important part of a positive experience for international students is engaging with domestic students and communities. Creating a network of friends who can provide social support in times of need is important to all students, many of whom are experiencing independent living for the first time. Engagement between Australian and international students also creates lifelong friendships that form the basis of strong cultural and economic ties.

There are benefits, as well, in connecting international students and researchers and their dependent family members and guardians with Australian organisations, families and individuals, outside of regular academic and student support systems. Communities in Australia with which international students share a common language and heritage and groups with an international outlook provide valuable support networks for students. Improved academic performance can be generated through participating in sporting and cultural activities, community voluntary projects and clubs and organisations. This helps build students’ communication and general skills, making them more impressive to employers. It is also a natural and effective way for students to learn about Australia, its people and its environment. When students return to their home countries, they take with them an appreciation of Australia and our values and interests that may influence decisions during their future careers.

For Australian communities, clubs and organisations, international students and researchers make a key contribution to multiculturalism. They bring enthusiasm, intelligence and insight to community activities and provide inspiration through their personal journeys. The Council of International Students Australia has played a strong role in telling the personal stories of students and highlighting the contribution of international students to Australia.

Many local governments recognise the value of relationships between international students and Australian communities, and have prioritised activities to welcome international students and encourage locals to engage with students. Institutions also manage a range of initiatives that help enrich students' study experiences with social, arts, sporting and tourism activities. However, as the Chaney report noted, we need a coordinated and systematic approach to raising awareness of the benefits that international students bring to Australia and to motivating Australian communities to connect with students.

The Australian Government welcomes institutions and state, territory and local governments:

- continuing to welcome international students and researchers into local communities through networking events, international student welcome days and festivals, and cultural awareness initiatives
- continuing to support international students to settle into life in Australia through community liaison officers, safety information and support and welfare support
- working with the Council of International Students Australia and the Australian Government to communicate to the Australian public a coordinated and positive message about the benefits of international students to the Australian economy and wider society.

The Australian Government encourages international students to:

- take the opportunity to create a network of friends who can provide social support and contribute to a positive experience in Australia during study, and stay connected after study
- participate in community activities and voluntary projects
- take the opportunity to engage visiting family and friends with Australian friends, colleagues and communities
- work with institutions and governments to communicate to the Australian public a coordinated and positive message about the benefits of international students.

The Australian Government will:

- build on the 'I'm not an Australian but I have an Australian story' initiative and work with the Council of International Students Australia, institutions and other governments to communicate to the Australian public a coordinated and positive message about the benefits of international students to encourage Australian student and community acceptance and welcoming of international students
- as part of this work, highlight best practices and innovative approaches in international student welfare and best practices in engagement between international students and Australian students and communities.

‘Many local governments recognise the value of relationships between international students and Australian communities.’



Brisbane Lord Mayor Graham Quirk appoints Nina Alahakoon (Australian Catholic University) as a Brisbane Student Ambassador. Each year around 30 international students become ambassadors for the city. Their role is to engage with their local community and share their experiences as international students studying and living in Brisbane to promote the city.

Goal 6: Embracing opportunities to grow international education

Australia will grow international education services, by embracing new technologies and responding to demand for offshore education and training services.

Australian institutions must be supported to anticipate and respond early to new ways of delivering education and to emerging markets. A coordinated programme of research and analysis that ensures good understanding of the trends and opportunities will help us achieve this.

Strategic action 6.1

Leading good practice in new modes of delivery, including online

New information and communication technologies are fundamentally changing the way people access information, knowledge and experts. These technologies can offer institutions, students and researchers flexible opportunities for teaching and collaboration irrespective of physical location. Online learning helps Australian institutions reach students overseas who may not be able to study in Australia. The Chaney report stated that new delivery models will likely include increased transnational delivery, online or distance delivery and tailored courses for professionals with discipline or organisation specific content. The Coalition's Online Higher Education Working Group also examined the potential to grow online education in its report *Higher Education in the Digital Age*. The Government's response to the report is at [Appendix D](#).

The dramatic rise of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) has shown that the barriers to institutions sharing online content are breaking down. Universities are offering high-quality online content for free, attracting international interest. MOOCs are also a way for students who may not have previous tertiary education and may have confidence barriers to formal study to access learning opportunities. For example, the first iteration of the University of Tasmania's "Understanding Dementia" MOOC attracted 9300 registrants from more than 60 countries worldwide. Unlike many MOOCs, it did not suffer from dramatic drop-out rates: more than 67 per cent of participants who started the course were still studying after four weeks. The course has also focused world attention on a strength of the University of Tasmania: research around social justice.

Universities are also considering digital credentialing as a way of recognising skills and achievements that happen within and beyond formal contexts. For example, in 2014, Deakin University announced that it would use a fee-based process to audit an individual's prior learning and award them badges on the basis of that assessment. The badges could be counted as credit towards Deakin University degrees. This is a potential avenue for the next generation of MOOCs.

While there are many opportunities to increase online teaching and learning to reach new and growing markets, there are also challenges. Presenting online courses requires significant resources, including capital investment, ongoing maintenance and equipment upgrades to remain relevant and competitive. Training academic staff to use new technologies is a further cost. Foreign governments and employers may have negative perceptions of graduates who have completed a course solely online. Employers also tend to value graduates with skills in team work, group problem solving and interpersonal communication gained through face-to-face modes of delivery. Developing a competitive advantage in this area will require careful consideration of all these issues.

Projects funded by the Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT) are encouraging the collaboration of partner universities to investigate innovative teaching and learning practices in technology enabled education. Sophisticated and innovative online resources have been created as a result of OLT funding and are publically accessible and can be embedded into the curricula of institutions. The Government is also providing funding of \$24.6 million to 13 projects that are trialling the delivery of innovative education and training practices through the Broadband Enabled Education and Skills Services programme.

The Australian Government encourages Australian institutions to:

- continue to explore innovative approaches to online education that give students greater flexibility over timing, place, path and pace of learning
- work with governments to undertake more analysis of the demand for online education, in relation to growing markets and preferred models of delivery
- supplement online education with experiential learning, such as videoconference discussions and webinars, as well as opportunities for residential programmes, internships or work experience.

The Australian Government will:

- work with Australian institutions and other governments to undertake more analysis of the demand for online education, in relation to growing markets and preferred models
- support research and pilot activities relating to best practice technology enabled learning, including through the OLT and the Broadband Enabled Education and Skills Services programme
- work with foreign governments and employers to build confidence in Australian qualifications and ensure qualifications gained through online learning are understood, recognised and valued overseas
- work with foreign governments to explore the strategies of leading countries in this area
- as part of the review of the ESOS framework, consider increasing the flexibility for some types of courses on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students as appropriate for distance and online learning.

The Australian Government will work with state and territory governments to:

- undertake more analysis of the demand for online education.

‘Online learning helps Australian institutions reach students overseas who may not be able to study in Australia.’



Perth-based private institution the Engineering Institute of Technology (EIT) uses a virtual classroom to simultaneously teach engineering and technology to students across the world. Their learning platform enables learners to train with an expert in the field and use EIT’s remote laboratories and simulation software to gain the practical, hands-on experience needed in engineering learning. EIT dean Steve Mackay, laboratory manager Kim Li and e-learning co-ordinator Holly Adams set up an engineering flow remote lab.

(Photo credit: EIT)

Strategic action 6.2

Enhancing opportunities to provide education services overseas

Over the past two decades, Australian education institutions have been providing high-quality education and training to thousands of international students outside Australia through a range of models. Services may be offered through joint and double degree programmes provided through partnership arrangements with foreign institutions or via traditional classroom and practicum teaching through Australian campuses overseas. For example, Curtin University established the first foreign university campus in East Malaysia in 1999, which now caters to over 3500 students from more than 40 countries. Services may also involve non-award study, including short-course delivery by an Australian institution using a curriculum tailored to suit local cultural, market and workplace conditions.

Australian VET providers have been very successful in expanding their education services overseas. These services range from provision of expertise and consultancy services, through to collaboration with overseas educational institutions, foreign government stakeholders or with industry partners to deliver Australian qualifications or contextualised training, such as skills sets or non-award training, to meet local skills needs. Australian training providers can also provide highly effective training solutions to address labour supply challenges for Australian firms seeking to invest offshore, building the capacity of the local labour force and strengthening the overall value proposition presented by Australian foreign direct investment.

Many countries in the Asia-Pacific, Latin America and Middle East regions have ambitious plans to skill and upskill significant cohorts of their working age population to improve productivity and industry engagement in their domestic and international labour markets. Australia's VET system is well respected internationally and there are strong levels of interest in Australia's approach to skills development and quality frameworks, which may provide exciting future opportunities for Australian VET stakeholders.

The success of Australia's VET system is a product of its alignment with Australian industry and labour market structures, and from the adaptability offered by a standards-based approach built on market-based principles. The increased mobility of skilled labour is driving a greater focus on regional or international industry demands and labour markets, and Australia is well placed to support the development of industry-led regional occupational and training standards, which can be benchmarked against Australian standards. This in turn may give rise to a new era of offshore training delivery of internationalised courses, and support more effective skills recognition and increased mobility of skilled labour within the region.

This could also encourage Australian business to expand in the Asia-Pacific region by enabling access to workers skilled to standards recognisable to Australian industry, thereby providing a measure of quality assurance for goods and services. Future foreign aid activities may also provide VET institutions with opportunities for ongoing engagement, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.

Offshore provision of secondary school education is also expanding. For example, schools are being licensed to deliver the Victorian Certificate of Education overseas. An offshore Australian education at school level can increase the interest of students in pursuing tertiary education in Australia.

The Australian Government encourages Australian institutions to continue to:

- adapt the Australian curriculum to meet the needs of different students in other countries, if the appropriate regulatory and accreditation procedures allow for this
- work with the Australian Government to develop and license training products that enable access to new opportunities to deliver skills and training to workforces overseas.

The Australian Government acknowledges that education peak bodies:

- establish formal agreements and associations in partner countries to assist institutions to expand their services overseas.

The Australian Government will:

- work with partner governments, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, to promote quality frameworks, VET systems and products (including international courses in specific industries) that generate new opportunities for Australian VET stakeholders to operate offshore
- work with education and training providers, governments and industry in the Asia-Pacific region to identify regional occupational and skills standards in priority industries, which can be benchmarked to Australian standards
- assist to develop and license training products that support institutions to take advantage of new opportunities to deliver skills and training to workforces overseas
- assist institutions to understand the appropriate regulatory and accreditation procedures that apply at home and abroad, including through Australia's overseas education and science counsellor network
- provide education and training institutions with information on Australian aid programmes and tendering requirements to enable them to take advantage of the associated opportunities
- protect Australia's reputation for high-quality education and training overseas, through the work of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency and the Australian Skills Quality Authority and their engagement with networks of overseas counterparts
- use multilateral forums to share information about quality assurance and qualifications and skills recognition
- through Australia's trade negotiations increase opportunities for Australian institutions in overseas markets
- continue to enable Australian providers to offer Australia Awards Short Courses overseas to flexibly meet the education and human resource needs of developing countries
- continue to engage the overseas operations of Australian institutions to provide in-country services to Australian Government sponsored students, for example English language tuition, for pending Australia Awards Scholarships recipients.

The Australian Government will work with state and territory governments, institutions and schools to:

- promote the high-quality outcomes that students achieve through their Australian qualifications
- consider options for expanding provision of school education overseas
- consider how to support smaller, regional education providers to cooperate in shared service hubs in new global markets.

Strategic action 6.3

Understanding the opportunities

The Chaney report highlighted that a strong evidence base is important to guide a coordinated approach to sustaining growth in international education. High-quality research and analysis on international education helps to inform the strategic directions of institutions and governments. Australia's international education data collection is widely regarded as one of the most comprehensive, accurate and timely in the world. Australia also has a leading role in several international forums advocating more effective student data reporting against common international standards.

While Australia's information base is strong, there are gaps that prevent an understanding of the full picture of Australian international engagement. Most data currently available on international students in Australia is limited to students studying on student visas. The Australian Government works with English Australia to identify the additional cohort of students who study ELICOS on other visa types. Over 50,000 additional students were identified in 2013 from that research, indicating that ELICOS students on student visas represented just over 60 per cent of all ELICOS students in Australia and hence only a part of the full economic contribution that ELICOS education makes to the Australian economy. It is likely that there are substantial numbers of international students not on student visas in Australia's other education sectors also. The economic contribution of students studying offshore in Australian institutions is also largely unknown and hence the significance of opportunities for expansion in this area can be overlooked.

Other gaps are in data on levels of school education partnerships and school education exchanges, which is difficult to coordinate given the devolved responsibility for school education in Australia. It has also been difficult to build a comprehensive picture of the level of education services being offered overseas by private VET providers. Long range information that traces language students from preschool to school education through to tertiary education is also patchy. Information on Australian students studying overseas has also traditionally been difficult to source.

The Australian Government encourages Australian institutions to continue to:

- undertake research and surveys to inform strategic directions and promotional activities, and to help provide a quality student experience
- provide information on international students studying in their onshore and offshore locations and programmes
- work with governments to better understand the progression of students' language study from pre-school to school education through to tertiary education.

The Australian Government will:

- collect and provide detailed information on enrolments and student visas, students studying English language courses on other visas and student satisfaction
- conduct monitoring and evaluation of the experiences of students studying in Australia on Australian Government sponsored scholarship programmes, for example the monitoring, evaluation and surveys of the Australia Awards programme
- undertake high-quality research and analysis on international education to help inform the strategic directions of institutions and governments

- through the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching, capture data on students enrolled in Australia who undertake an overseas study experience to compare Australian students' overseas experiences with that of their international counterparts, understand the correlation between studying overseas and employment outcomes, and assist institutions, businesses and governments to develop and enhance mobility programmes
- work with state and territory governments and institutions to better understand the progression of students' language study from pre-school to school education through to tertiary education
- work with institutions, peak bodies and other governments to expand the International Education Research Network internationally to attract researchers, experts and advocates to provide a stronger global perspective on Australia's international education research agenda
- play a leading role in international forums to encourage best practice on international education data collection.

The Australian Government will continue to work with state and territory governments to:

- consider ways to better coordinate information on levels and outcomes of school education partnerships and school education exchanges
- better understand the progression of students' language study from pre-school to school education through to tertiary education.



Ratna Gurung, Endeavour Awardee, Veterinary Science

Measures of success

Improving the experience of students in Australia and expanding provision of Australian education and training overseas

- Higher levels of satisfaction with education experiences and outcomes.
- More instances of eligible international students getting employment experiences after graduation.
- Higher levels of satisfaction with the cost of a range of services.
- An increased percentage of purpose-built accommodation for students relative to non-purpose-built accommodation.
- Higher levels of satisfaction in the English language competency of international student graduates reported by employers.
- Higher levels of satisfaction among international students in relation to the opportunities to interact with Australian students and communities.
- Increased numbers of international students enrolling with Australian providers overseas.
- Greater take-up of Australian qualifications provided through distance education and online.
- More country TVET quality frameworks in the Asia-Pacific region use Australia's VET quality frameworks as a reference point.



Conclusion: Taking a broader view of Australian international education

Australia has been engaged in the global enterprise of international education for the past 50 years. The development of Australian international education within Australia has largely been the work of our institutions, teachers, academics, researchers and professionals. Governments have supported institutions to pursue their engagement through developing the platform of qualifications recognition, protections for international students, supportive visa settings and relationships with counterpart governments that have allowed for mobility and collaborative research. All parts of the Australian international education community have worked to ensure an understanding of the quality and value of Australian education and training.

For many Australian institutions, international education has always meant taking a global perspective while acting in local and national interests. International education is the key to creating people who have the capacity to operate in a globalised world.

A coordinated approach is needed to ensure that Australia sets the highest possible standards in education and research. If we fail to position Australia among the best education systems in the world, with some of our institutions as the very best, we cannot expect to continue to attract the best and brightest students, teachers, academics and researchers, nor maintain our global relationships.

Consultation on international education and a coordinated national strategy that covers all the dimensions of global engagement including language study, student, academic and professional exchange, research collaboration and internationalised curriculum, are vital to stay competitive and expand the reach of Australian international education. Through this new architecture, we will set a clear path for growth and ensure our most successful knowledge industry and largest services export is sustainable in the face of intensifying competition.

Appendix A: Australian international education data snapshot

The global context

Figure A: Distribution of foreign students in tertiary education by country of destination, 2012

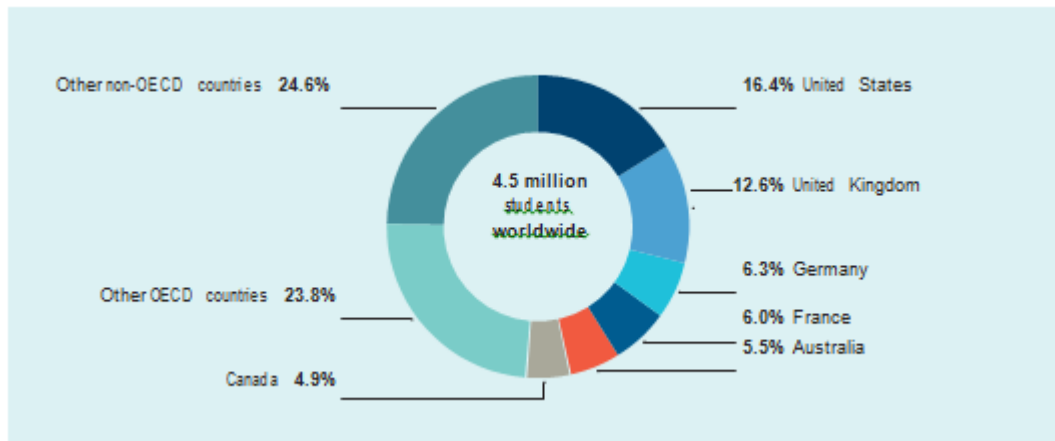
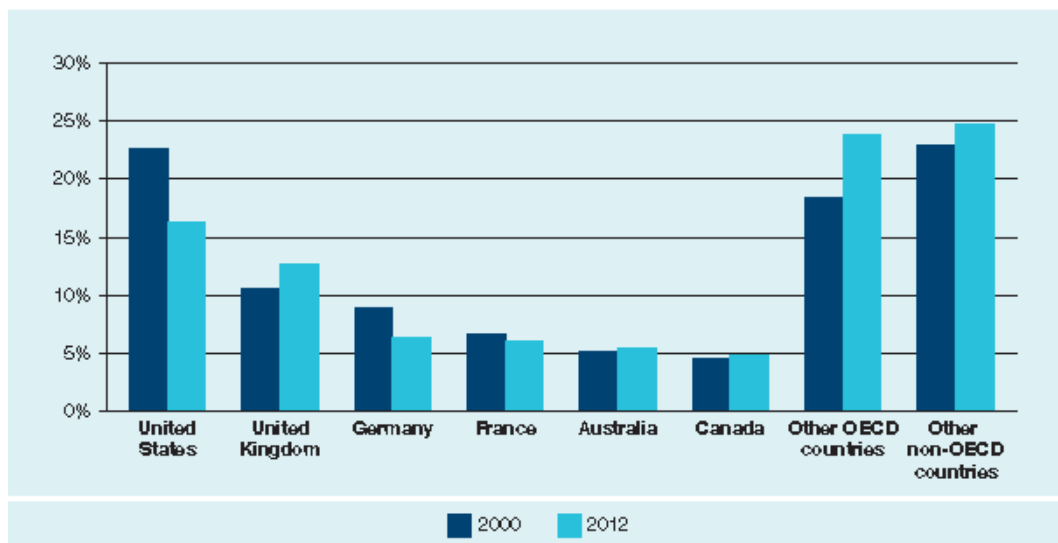


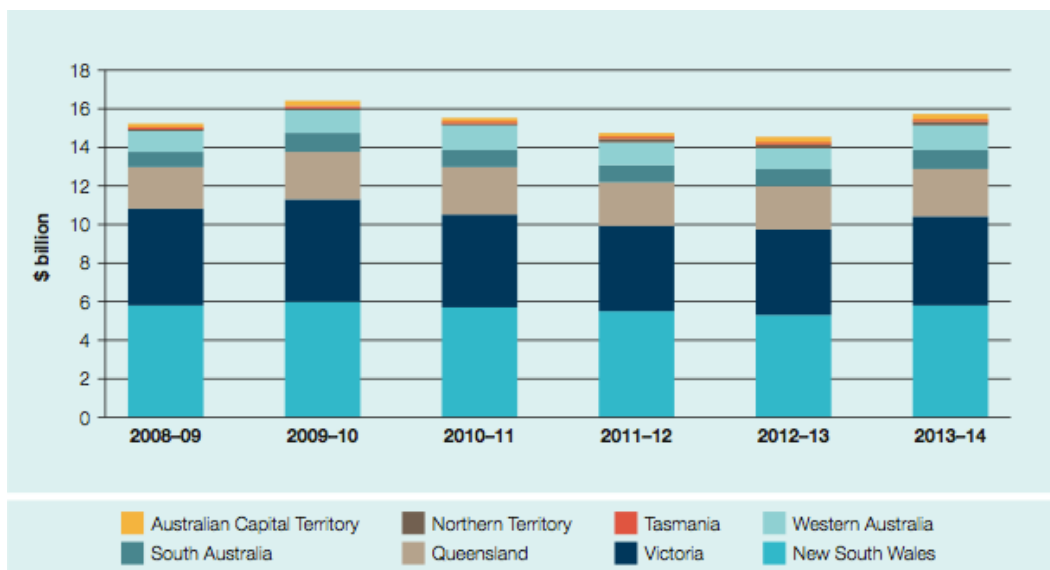
Figure B: International education market shares, 2000 and 2012



Source: OECD (2014), Education at a Glance 2014

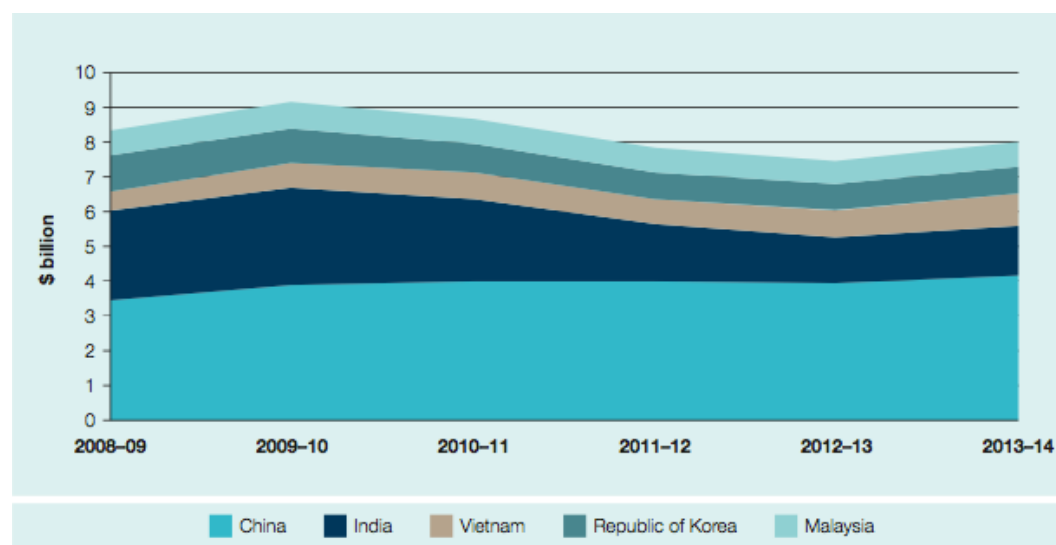
Export income to Australia from education services

Figure C: Education services export income by state and territory, 2008–2014



58

Figure D: Top five source countries for education services export income, 2008–2014



Source: ABS International Trade in Services by Country, by State and by Detailed Services Category, Financial Year, 2013–14 (ABS Catalogue No. 5368.0.55.003).

International student enrolments

Figure E: International student enrolments by sector, 2009–2014

Sector enrolments	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	% Change 2009-2014	% Change 2013-2014
Higher Education	225,720	242,025	241,049	230,000	230,436	249,990	10.8%	8.5%
VET	208,288	205,362	169,604	144,261	134,060	149,785	-28.1%	11.7%
Schools	27,344	24,094	20,722	18,520	17,756	18,451	-32.5%	3.9%
ELICOS	138,450	113,936	95,252	95,632	115,023	137,469	-0.7%	19.5%
Non-Award	30,927	30,849	27,563	25,092	27,902	34,165	10.5%	22.4%
Total in Australia	630,729	616,266	554,190	513,505	525,177	589,860	-6.5%	12.3%

Figure F: International student higher education enrolments by field of education, 2009–2014

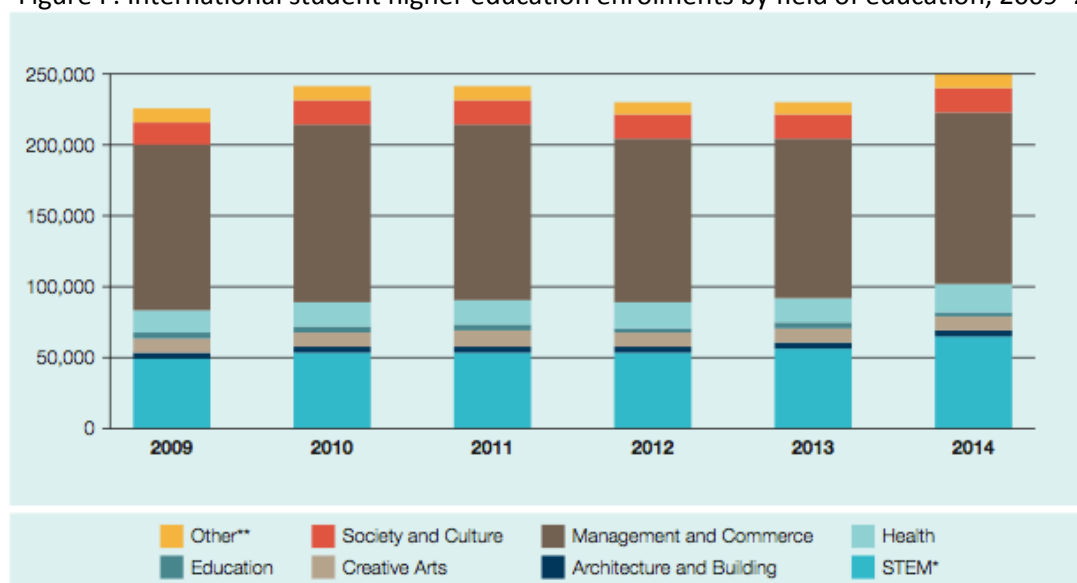
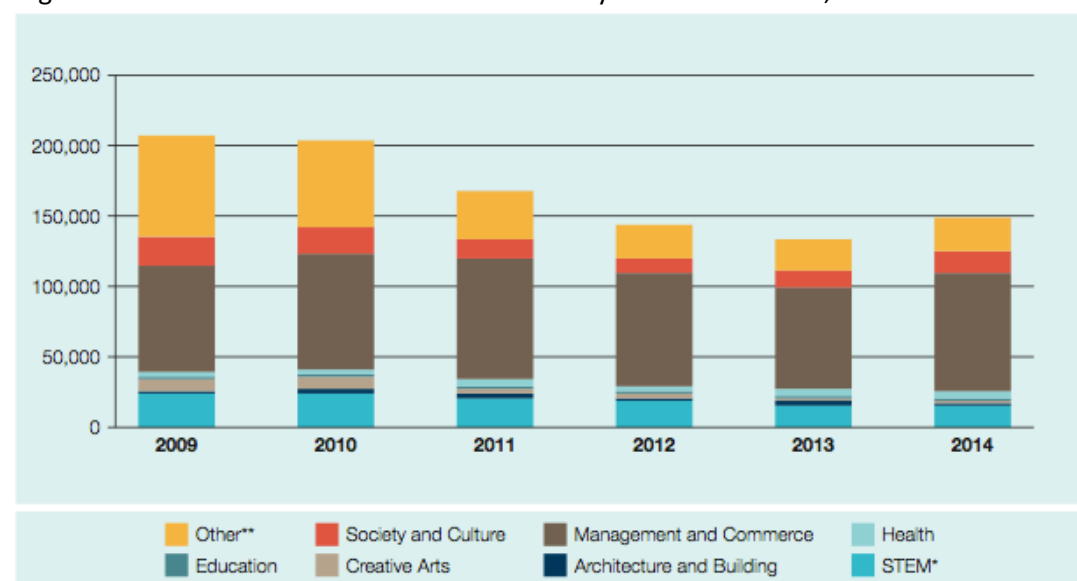


Figure G: International student VET enrolments by field of education, 2009–2014



*STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) includes Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies, Engineering and Related Technologies, Information Technology and Natural and Physical Sciences.

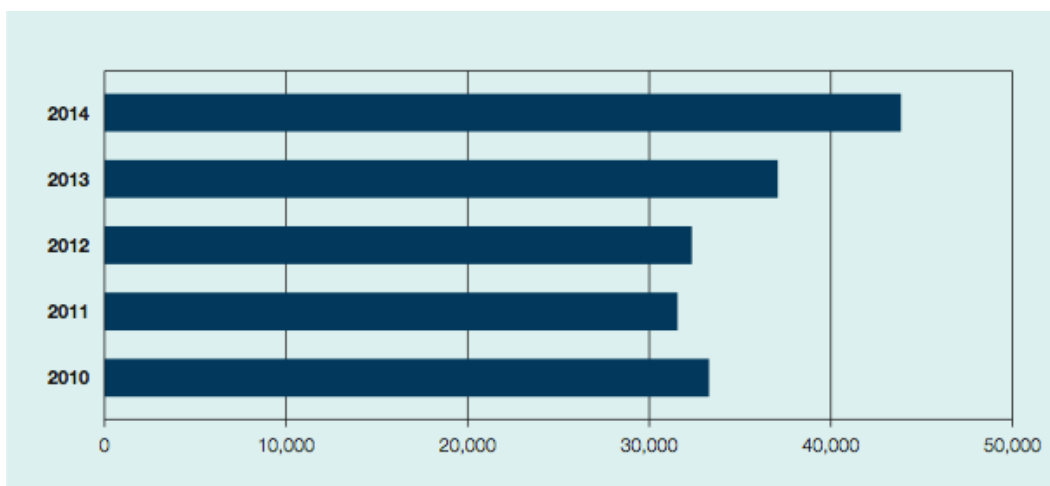
**mixed field programmes, food, hospitality and personal services and dual qualifications

Source: Department of Education and Training, February 2015

Figure H: Top five source countries international student enrolments by sector, 2014

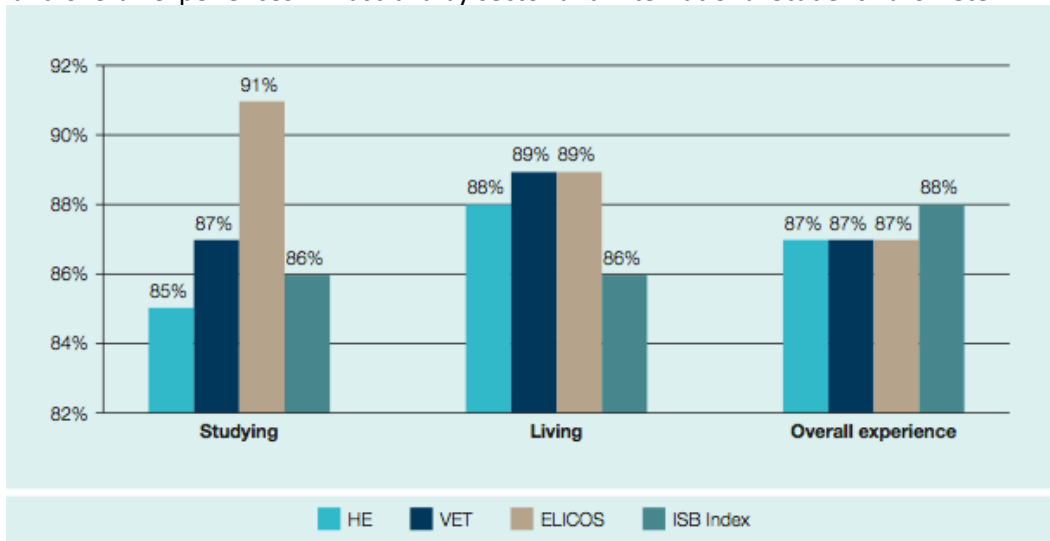
Sector	1	2	3	4	5	
All sectors	China 25.9%	India 10.7%	Vietnam 5.1%	Republic of Korea 4.8%	Thailand 4.4%	Other 49.1%
Higher education	China 36.1%	India 10.5%	Malaysia 5.7%	Vietnam 4.8%	Nepal 4.1%	Other 38.8%
VET	India 18.8%	China 8.8%	Republic of Korea 7.8%	Thailand 6.9%	Indonesia 4.6%	Other 53.1%
ELICOS	China 23.9%	Brazil 8.6%	Thailand 8.6%	Vietnam 7.0%	Colombia 6.7%	Other 45.2%
Schools	China 45.5%	Vietnam 9.4%	Republic of Korea 8.0%	Germany 4.7%	Japan 4.6%	Other 27.8%
Non-award	China 24.0%	USA 15.7%	Brazil 10.4%	Germany 5.2%	UK 4.4%	Other 40.3%

Figure I: International student enrolments from Latin America, 2010–2014



International student satisfaction

Figure J: Percentage of tertiary respondents who were satisfied or very satisfied with studying, living and overall experiences in Australia by sector and International Student Barometer in 2012



Cross-border education and training

Figure K: Offshore (on-campus) higher education students by broad field of education, 2003–2013

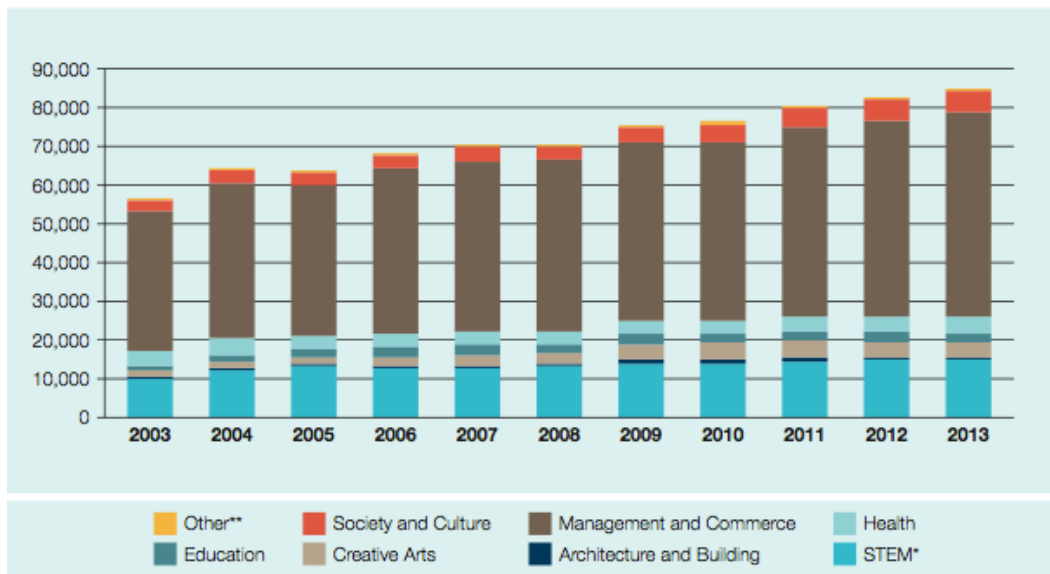
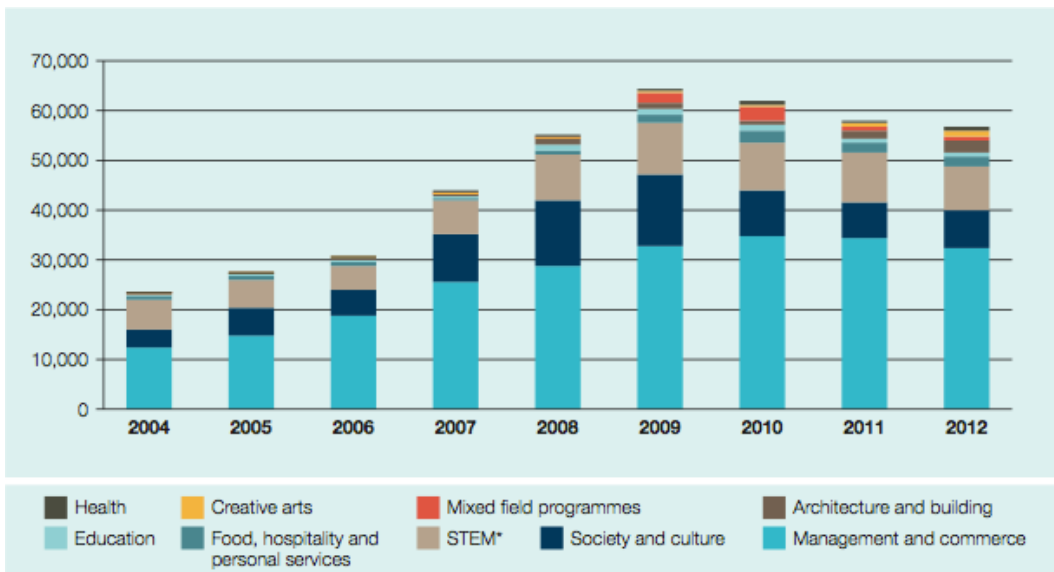


Figure L: Offshore public VET students by broad field of education, 2004–2012



*STEM includes Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies, Engineering and Related Technologies, Information Technology and Natural and Physical Sciences.

**Mixed programmes and non-award courses.

Source: Department of Education and Training, 2014

Study pathways of international students in Australia

Figure M: Sector in which enrolled immediately before VET, 2013

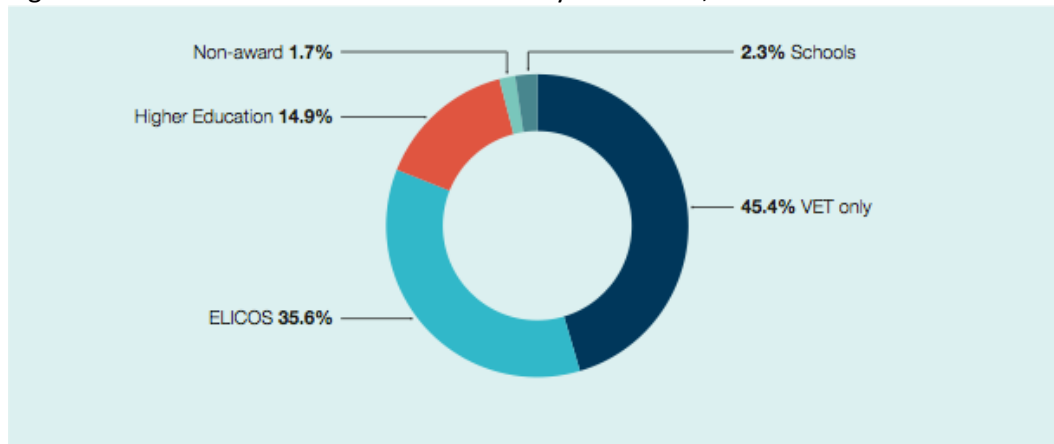
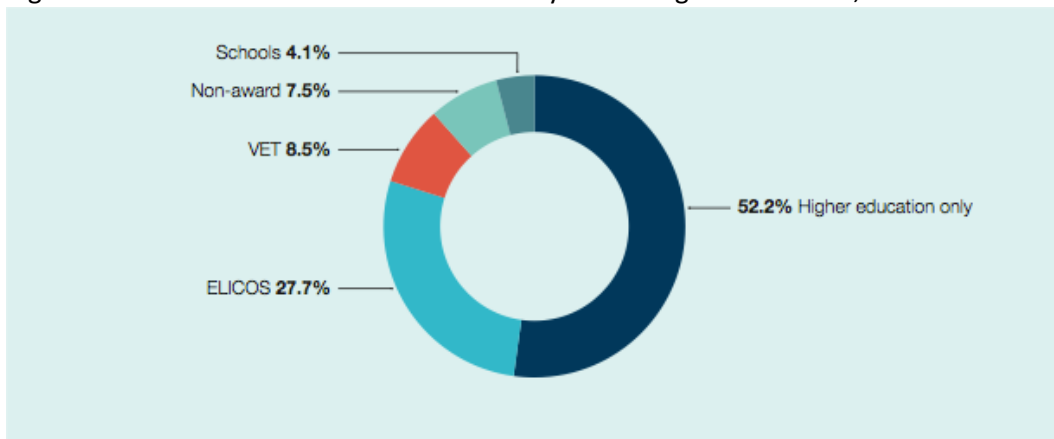


Figure N: Sector in which enrolled immediately before higher education, 2013



Source: Department of Education and Training, 2014

Australian students studying abroad

Figure O: Australian university students on short-term overseas study programmes, 2010–2013

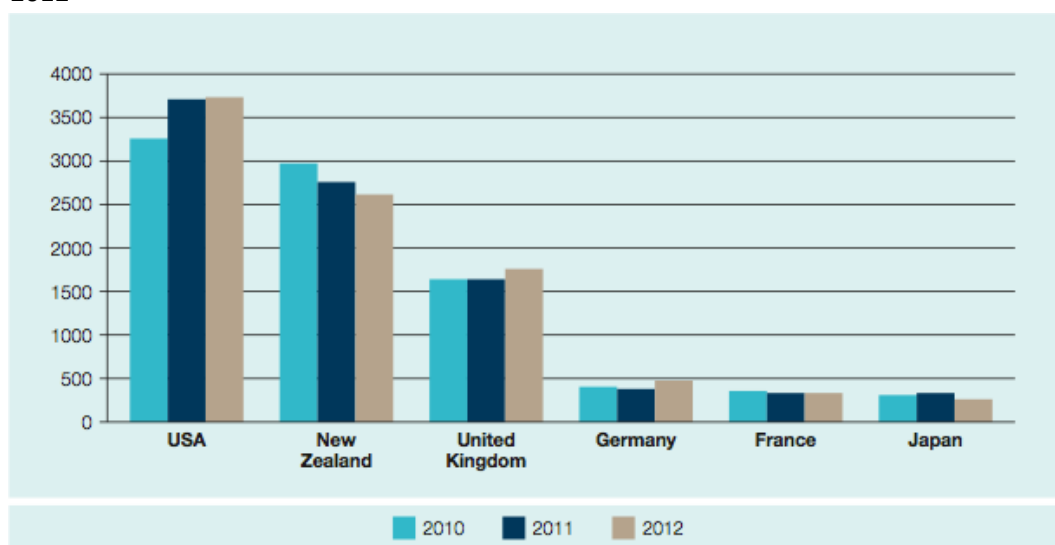
Region	2010	2011	2012	2013	% Change 2012-2013	% Change 2010-2013
Europe	6,517	7,587	8,288	9,901	19.5%	51.9%
Americas	4,232	4,811	5,534	6,345	14.7%	49.9%
North East Asia	3,014	3,396	3,750	4,678	24.8%	55.2%
South East Asia	1,827	2,478	3,026	3,970	31.2%	117.3%
South Asia	688	885	1,081	1,557	44.1%	126.3%
Middle East and Africa	494	633	835	1,364	63.5%	176.1%
Oceania	503	593	723	1,118	54.7%	122.3%
Australia*	130	273	430	356	-17.2%	173.8%
Total	17,405	20,656	23,664	29,289	23.8%	68.3%

*Students attending an Australian campus offshore.

Source: Australian Universities International Directors Forum, 2013

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Figure P: Top six destinations for long-term outbound Australian higher education students, 2010–2012



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics

Appendix B:

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Appendix C:

Australian Government response to *Australia—Educating Globally*

The Australian Government warmly welcomes the report of the International Education Advisory Council, chaired by Michael Chaney AO, *Australia—Educating Globally*.

The report was released in February 2013 and provides sound and considered advice on the challenges and opportunities facing international education in Australia. It proposed seven issues as critical to the future of Australia’s international education efforts: coordination; quality; a positive student experience; partnerships; ensuring integrity— Australia’s student visa programme; data analysis and research in international education; and competition, promotion and marketing. The advice identified a strategic aim and specific recommendations under each. The Government’s response to this advice considers these issues in turn.

A. Coordination

Strategic aim: *Ensure improved coordination of government policy and programs for international education and better consultative mechanisms for stakeholders, in order to optimise government support for the international education sector.*

Recommendation	Government response
<p>A.1 Establish a Ministerial Coordinating Council on International Education (MCCIE) chaired by the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research and including Ministers from relevant portfolios, drawing on expertise from across the sector, governments, business and industry to provide a coordinated approach to identifying and addressing key issues in Australia’s international education sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MCCIE would provide oversight of a five year strategy. 	<p>Agreed. The Government will lead the development of a National Strategy for International Education in close consultation with government, education and business leaders and the broader international education community.</p> <p>The Minister for Education and Training will convene roundtables on international education and convene a ministerially led coordinating council for international education. The roundtables will include relevant portfolio Ministers, community and business leaders and state and territory government representatives.</p>
<p>A.2 Formulate a work plan for the Government’s five year international education strategy shaped by the Vision and Mission statement and based on the issues and recommendations from this report.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government will report on progress against actions identified in the National Strategy for International Education in consultation with international education stakeholders.</p>

B. Quality

Strategic aim: *Position Australia as a provider of the highest quality education, while reducing over-regulation, duplication and overlap.*

Recommendation	Government response
<p>B.1 Allow a settling-in period for the new regulatory agencies, monitoring the effects and outcomes and making adjustments as required, with a full review at the end of their first audit cycle.</p> <p>B.2 Monitor the progress of TEQSA and ASQA in refining regulatory processes, including the course approval process.</p> <p>B.3 Further consolidate the regulatory requirements for providers serving more than one sector.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government is implementing all recommendations from the Review of Higher Education Regulation and the Review of Reporting Requirements for Universities and reviewing the <i>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</i> (ESOS Act) framework.</p> <p>See Strategic action 1.4</p>
<p>B.4 Continue to progress international recognition of Australian qualifications through government-to-government and multinational dialogue.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government places a high priority on advancing the international recognition of Australian qualifications through bilateral and multinational fora and through the establishment and maintenance of formal recognition agreements.</p> <p>See Strategic actions 2.3, 6.1 and 6.2</p>
<p>B.5 Ensure that any new regulations that there are significant differences within the international education sector and a 'one size fits all' approach may not be feasible.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government is implementing its deregulation agenda.</p> <p>See Strategic action 1.4</p>
<p>B.6 Investigate seeding initiatives for online education delivery.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government supports research and activities on technology enabled learning through the Teaching and the Broadband Enabled Education and Skills Services programme.</p> <p>See Strategic action 6.1</p>
<p>B.7 Liaise with TEQSA and ASQA to ensure the quality of transnational education is effectively regulated.</p>	<p>Agreed. TESQA and ASQA ensure that qualifications meet nationally consistent quality standards. They apply a rigorous approach to offshore provision of education in partnership with Australian Government, state and territory agencies.</p> <p>See Strategic actions 1.4 and 6.2</p>

Recommendation	Government response
B.8 Require providers to establish processes that ensure international students maintain adequate English language proficiency throughout the duration of study to prepare graduates for work experience and employment opportunities.	Agreed. The Government is working closely with stakeholders to review the <i>ELICOS National Standards</i> as part of the ESOS review. See Strategic action 5.3
B.9 Grow excellence in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) capability and increase education quality through targeting and providing further incentives for top international academics and PhD students in these fields to study and teach in Australia.	Agreed. The Government is considering its response to the approach to STEM recommended by the Office of the Chief Scientist in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics: Australia's Future. See Strategic action 4.1

C. A positive student experience

Strategic aim: Maintain and build on Australia's reputation as an open and friendly learning environment where international students are valued members of the community and are supported to achieve their goals.

Recommendation	Government response
C.1 Ensure that international students in each jurisdiction are treated in an equal way to domestic students with respect to transport concessions.	Agreed. All state and territory jurisdictions have addressed this issue to a large extent though the Council of Australian Governments International Students Strategy for Australia 2010–2014. The Government will continue to work with other governments to encourage even greater consistency across jurisdictions. See Strategic action 5.4
C.2 Ensure that international students have access to appropriate treatment in public hospitals, given that they are required to have visa length health insurance cover.	Agreed. The Government will continue to work with other governments to encourage consistent treatment in public hospitals across jurisdictions and raise awareness in students of the level of access to which they are entitled. See Strategic action 5.4

Recommendation	Government response
<p>C.3 Promote meaningful engagement between international students, domestic students and communities (including forums) across Australia to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> highlight best practices and innovative welfare promote best practice in interaction between international students and domestic students and communities, promoting work integrated learning opportunities for international students. 	<p>Agreed. The Government will actively seek opportunities to work with stakeholders to promote meaningful engagement between international students and Australian students and communities</p> <p>See Strategic action 5.6</p>
<p>C.4 Review off-campus accommodation by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conducting a sample stocktake of accommodation developing a quality/ratings model for accommodation commissioning a panel to investigate options for increasing access to safe, affordable student accommodation and identifying possible infrastructure investment opportunities. 	<p>Agreed. The Government commissioned a sample stocktake of existing tertiary student accommodation and will examine other options available to students studying in Australia, to help identify what works well and potential areas for improvement.</p> <p>See Strategic action 5.5</p>
<p>C.5 Promote opportunities for international students to gain work experience during and after their studies.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government supported research into the benefits to employers of participating in work-integrated learning through Australian universities and the barriers and enablers to participation. It is planning research into the employability of international students. Appropriate visa settings are in place.</p> <p>See Strategic actions 5.1, 5.2 and 6.3</p>
<p>C.6 Require Austrade to undertake an assessment and analysis of emerging markets, in collaboration with key stakeholders, to inform the development of a strategy to support increased diversification of Australia's international education sector.</p>	<p>Agreed. Austrade is developing a long-term market development plan.</p> <p>See Strategic actions 2.4, 4.2 and 6.2</p>

D. Partnerships

Strategic aim: Encourage Australian institutions and governments to develop strong and diverse international and multinational partnerships that encourage exchange, capacity building and collaboration.

Recommendation	Government response
D.1 Monitor changes to OS-HELP and consider extending it to private students.	<p>Agreed. The Government has proposed extending Commonwealth-supported places to more students, including undergraduates studying with private universities and non-university higher education institutions. This would significantly expand access to OS-HELP.</p> <p>See Strategic actions 1.1 and 3.1</p>
D.2 Increase the proportion of school students studying a foreign language at matriculation level; with consideration given to increased subject bonuses and incentives.	<p>Agreed. The Government is implementing a strategy to rejuvenate language study over the next five to 10 years. The Government has supported a trial of online language learning for pre-school age children and is considering research on how to encourage more secondary students to continue language education. The Government is addressing the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group recommendation that every primary school teacher has a specialisation in languages, science or mathematics.</p> <p>See Strategic action 3.2</p>
<p>D.3 Ensure that national research policy settings encourage collaboration between institutions in Australia in order to achieve the necessary scale benefits.</p> <p>D.4 Ensure that national research policy settings encourage international research engagement and collaboration to build on and enhance Australia's research capabilities.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government encourages international research collaboration through the Australian Research Council, the National Health and Medical Research Council, and the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy. The Government supports international research collaboration through maintaining positive science-focused diplomatic relationships and making strategic investments in globally-connected research and research infrastructure. The Government is considering the approach to international engagement in STEM recommended by the Office of the Chief Scientist in <i>Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics: Australia's Future</i>.</p> <p>See Strategic actions 1.2 and 2.2</p>

Recommendation	Government response
<p>D.5 Provide incentives for the development of partnerships between Australian and overseas institutions for the purpose of exchange of students and academics; research collaborations and common teaching course and qualification development, including offering joint qualifications.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government builds confidence in Australian education and supports institutions to drive student, research and professional exchanges, research collaborations and to provide education services offshore.</p> <p>The Government will provide funding to the Australia-Indonesia Centre and the Australia-India Institute.</p> <p>See Strategic actions 2.2, 2.3, 3.1 and 4.1</p>
<p>D.6 Develop specific country strategies to support partnerships between Australian institutions and providers and their counterparts.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government supports a range of specific education and research initiatives with countries or regions, including through the New Colombo Plan, and through dedicated funds for science collaboration with China and India.</p> <p>See Strategic actions 2.3, 2.4 and 4.2</p>
<p>D.7 Identify potential new links between Australian education and training expertise and Australian and overseas businesses, through the establishment of industry champions.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Minister for Education and Training will convene two roundtables on international education each year with representatives of Australian business. In addition, the New Colombo Plan includes significant engagement with the Australian business community.</p> <p>See Strategic action 3.1</p>
<p>D.8 Encourage Australia's high quality TAFE and private VET providers to increase the commercialisation of their intellectual property and highly regarded training 'know how' in traditional and emerging markets.</p>	<p>Agreed. Institutions are working with the Government to develop internationally relevant courses to help improve the skills base within our region.</p> <p>See Strategic action 6.2</p>
<p>D.9 Facilitate the offshore provision of education and training by Australian providers by participating in the foreign aid programs of AusAID.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government provides institutions with information on Australian aid programmes and tendering requirements.</p> <p>See Strategic action 6.2</p>
<p>D.10 Encourage institutions to identify and pursue possible partnership opportunities arising through the development of regional education hubs such as Singapore and Malaysia.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government assists institutions to understand the policy settings and regulatory and accreditation procedures that apply abroad, including in emerging markets.</p> <p>Austrade is developing a long-term market development plan.</p> <p>See Strategic actions 2.3, 4.2 and 6.2</p>

E. Australia’s student visa programme

Strategic aim: Ensure that Australia’s student visa settings continue to be competitive and attractive in all education sectors while preserving the integrity of Australia’s international student visa program and helping to meet national skills needs.

Recommendation	Government response
<p>E.1 Conduct a review of the first year operation of the GTE criterion, identifying and addressing any unintended consequences` that affect the sector including the extent to which it may be acting as a deterrent to genuine students.</p>	<p>Agreed. The 2013 review of the first 18 months of the operation of the Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE) found that it is not a significant deterrent to genuine students wishing to study in Australia. The Government will continue to consult.</p> <p>See Strategic action 5.1</p>
<p>E.2 Expedite streamlined visa processing for low immigration risk providers.</p>	<p>Agreed. In 2014 the Government extended streamlined visa processing arrangements to certain eligible non-university higher education providers offering degree courses and certain eligible VET and higher education providers for advanced diploma level courses. The Government will continue to consult.</p> <p>See Strategic action 5.1</p>
<p>E.3 Implement a whole of Australian Government approach to educating employers on the value of recruiting graduates, both domestic and international.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government is supporting the International Education Association of Australia’s employment symposium and the development of employment guides for employers, institutions and students. The Department of Immigration and Border Protection has developed web-based information for international students and Australian employers regarding post- study work arrangements, as well as arrangements that are in place to facilitate work opportunities for international students during study.</p> <p>See Strategic action 5.2</p>
<p>E.4 Consider increasing the points available an Australian education qualification in the skilled migration points test from five to 10.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government is considering for this in the context of the current review of the skilled migration programme.</p> <p>See Strategic action 5.1</p>

F. Data analysis and research in international education

Strategic aim: Inform Australia’s international education policy through accurate and timely data analysis and research as well as supporting increased collaboration between researchers.

Recommendation	Government response
F.1 Consult with researchers and organisations already active in the field, to establish an Australia-Asia International Education Research Network (and maintain a regular national symposium for international education research) where governments and the sector work together to share knowledge and establish new research priorities.	Agreed. The Government will support the further expansion of the International Education Research Network. See Strategic action 6.3.

G. Competition, promotion and marketing

Strategic aim: Market Australia as a supplier of high quality education and continue to build its core markets while pursuing diversification through engagement with emerging markets and increased offshore delivery.

Recommendation	Government response
<p>G.1 Annually review Austrade’s contribution to promotion and marketing of international education, including performance and activities.</p>	<p>Agreed. Austrade produces annual performance reporting on its work in marketing Australian education internationally, in accordance with the <i>Trade Commission Act 1985</i>.</p> <p>Austrade is developing a long-term market development plan.</p> <p>See Strategic action 4.2</p>
<p>G.2 Develop and implement a communications campaign to articulate the many economic and cultural benefits that international education and students bring to Australia.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government encourages institutions, students, communities and local, state and territory governments to welcome and value the contribution of international students to Australia.</p> <p>See Strategic action 5.6</p>
<p>G.3 Increase and coordinate promotion of the sector in emerging regions, such as Latin America, the Middle East and Africa.</p>	<p>Agreed. The Government works with institutions to assess and analyse established and emerging markets, and to coordinate national marketing and promotion strategies, including through the <i>Future Unlimited</i> brand.</p> <p>The Government has established an education and science counsellor position in Brasilia.</p> <p>The Government is building education relationships with countries in the Middle East.</p> <p>See Strategic actions 2.4 and 4.2</p>

Appendix D: Australian Government response to the Coalition's Online Higher Education Working Group

On 28 February 2013, the Hon Tony Abbott MP, then Leader of the Opposition, established an Online Higher Education Working Group, chaired by the Hon Alan Tudge MP, to assess the trends, benefits and challenges of online learning, and identify policy measures to best capture the benefits and challenges for Australian students, higher education institutions and the economy.

The Working Group received over 60 written submissions and conducted almost 70 formal meetings with stakeholders and delivered its report, *Higher Education in the Digital Age*, in June 2013. The Working Group, in consultation with stakeholders, identified ways in which Australia could be better positioned to adapt swiftly to change and remove barriers to innovation and future opportunities. The report noted that online learning is changing the higher education landscape and challenging traditional ways of learning and teaching. A summary of implications and actions for international education is described below.

Removing barriers to innovation

Action

The Government has committed to reducing the regulatory burden for universities so they have the freedom to innovate and to focus on enhancing the quality of their teaching and research. As such, in October 2013, the government accepted all of the recommendations from the independent Review of Higher Education Regulation (the Review), which was released in August 2013. The Government is currently working through the implementation of the Review's recommendations.

To further these objectives, legislative amendments to the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* passed the Parliament on 4 December 2014. The measures in the *TEQSA Amendment Bill 2014* are directed at further improving the efficiency of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) and reducing regulatory burden on higher education institutions.

Flexibility exists in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) to allow for faster completion and students may be fast-tracked through, for example, providers offering three semesters of study per year or intensive periods, including through online delivery.

Some universities have adopted a more flexible approach to teaching periods but online learning provides the opportunity for year-long study if desired. As autonomous institutions which make their own decisions about academic offerings and modes of delivery, universities are already exploring the opportunities and challenges of faster delivery platforms.

To support understanding in the sector, TEQSA has published a FAQ outlining that it interprets the AQF with flexibility on a case-by-case basis. In assessing whether courses meet the volume of learning requirements, TEQSA states it is most concerned as to whether students are able to achieve the learning outcomes in the specified course duration.

Also, in response to stakeholder concerns, work was undertaken in 2014 to make minor changes to the AQF Masters Degree Specification for consistency and to make it more user-friendly and to reinforce the flexibility and professional discretion in the design and development of programmes of learning leading to a Masters Degree.

Creating incentives for digital take up

The report also recommended several new measures to assist institutions to transition to digital platforms, including encouraging collaboration in course development.

Action

The dramatic rise of MOOCs has demonstrated that the barriers to institutions sharing online content are breaking down and universities are offering high-quality online content for free, attracting international interest. As the demand for online content increases, some institutions have licensed content from expert providers, incorporating the material into their own curricula.

The Office for Learning and Teaching provides a suite of grants, awards and fellowships for universities to research, implement and embed innovations in learning and teaching. Projects funded by the Office for Learning and Teaching encourage the collaboration of the partner universities to investigate innovative learning and teaching practices, including the development of sophisticated online resources that can be shared across institutions.

Growing the international education market

The report emphasised the importance of capturing international export opportunities, and to that end recommended that a comprehensive international education strategy should focus on the opportunities presented by online offerings and the digital world.

Action

Consistent with the key recommendations of *Australia—Educating Globally* (the Chaney report), the Government is developing a *National Strategy for International Education*. The draft strategy covers a range of opportunities and challenges facing the Australian international education sector and includes strategic actions to support growing opportunities offshore through new modes of delivery such as online.

The draft strategy recognises the potential of online education in reaching more students overseas who are unable to study in Australia (due to cost, disability or other personal circumstances), as well as the key challenges in providing online education to international students. Consultation on the draft strategy will include consideration of these opportunities and challenges.

The draft strategy outlines Australian Government actions to address these issues: working with Australian institutions to undertake more analysis of the demand for online education; support for research and pilot activities relating to best practice technology enabled learning, continuing to build confidence in Australian qualifications through bilateral and multilateral dialogues, and using our bilateral dialogues to explore the strategies and best practices of leading countries.

Appendix E:

Consultations on international education

The following is a list of Australian Government consultation processes that, along with other consultation with the sector, have informed the development of the draft *National Strategy for International Education*.

Department of Education and Training

Review of the Australian Curriculum

www.studentsfirst.gov.au/review-australian-curriculum

Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group

www.studentsfirst.gov.au/teacher-education-ministerial-advisory-group

Review of the Demand Driven Funding System

<http://education.gov.au/report-review-demand-driven-funding-system>

Reform of the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 Framework

<http://education.gov.au/news/discussion-paper-released-reform-education-services-overseas-students-framework>

Industry Innovation and Competitiveness Agenda – Boosting the Commercial Returns from Research

<http://education.gov.au/news/discussion-paper-boosting-commercial-returns-research-released>

Review of Higher Education Regulation

<http://education.gov.au/review-higher-education-regulation-1>

Alignment of the Australian Qualifications Framework with the New Zealand Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework

www.aqf.edu.au/resources/reports/international-projects/

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Advisory Council

<http://education.gov.au/teqsa-advisory-council>

The Vocational Education and Training Advisory Board

www.vetreform.industry.gov.au/news/vocational-education-and-training-advisory-board-established

Industry Innovation and Competitiveness Agenda—The Industry Skills Fund

<http://vetreform.industry.gov.au/publication/industry-skills-fund-%E2%80%93-youth-pilot-programmes-discussion-paper>

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

A range of regular stakeholder discussions led by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade have informed the development and implementation of the New Colombo Plan. www.dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/new-colombo-plan/pages/new-colombo-plan.aspx

Department of Immigration and Border Protection

The Education Visa Consultative Committee

www.immi.gov.au/About/Pages/stakeholder-engagement/national/other-structures.aspx

Review of the skilled migration and temporary activity visa programmes

www.immi.gov.au/pub-res/Pages/discussion-papers/overview.aspx

Future directions for streamlined visa processing

<http://acpet.edu.au/uploads/files/Future%20directions%20for%20streamlined%20visa%20processing%20-%20discussion%20paper.pdf>

Joint Review of Border Fees, Charges and Taxes

www.customs.gov.au/feesreview/

Department of Industry and Science

Industry Innovation and Competitiveness Agenda—The Industry Growth Centres Initiative

www.industry.gov.au/industry/Pages/Industry-Growth-Centres.aspx#header

Chief Scientist for Australia

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics: Australia's Future

www.chiefscientist.gov.au/2014/09/professor-chubb-releases-science-technology-engineering-and-mathematics-australias-future/

The Commonwealth Science Council

www.chiefscientist.gov.au/2014/11/commonwealth-science-council/

Austrade

Austrade education information

www.austrade.gov.au/Education/Home

Productivity Commission

International Education Services—research project

www.pc.gov.au/research/current/international-education

The Liberal Party of Australia

Online Higher Education Working Group

www.liberal.org.au/latest-news/2013/02/28/tony-abbott-press-release-coalitions-online-higher-education-working-group

In addition to the consultation processes listed above, the Australian Government regularly consults with state and territory government representatives on international education policy matters.

Menzies Research Centre

Extensive consultation throughout 2013 on the policy development of the New Colombo Plan.

Members of the steering group in this consultation became members of the reference group for the implementation of the New Colombo Plan. www.menziesrc.org/news/item/new-colombo-plan-paper-and-policy



