

Organisation: TAFE Queensland

Question 1. How can government, institutions and communities better promote the valuable and unique experience of studying and living in regional Australia?

- Change perception
 - International students do not just “take jobs from locals”.
 - Consider an international study campaign onshore (for Australians) – a commercial that highlights the benefits of international students coming to Australia – ie boost the economy through retail, hospitality, tourism, accommodation, multiculturalism etc. The message should be about Australians changing the way they see International students from “taking our jobs” to contributing to the community/economy.
- Showcase the benefits of living in regional Australia – living conditions, cost of living, culture, safety
- Engage with local industry to promote internships / employment opportunities
- Offer scholarships / reduced fee structure
- Develop partnerships with regional institutes
- Promote success stories. Students who have studied in regional Australia, have been successful finding employment and are now residing permanently in the area.
- Promote regional unique programs that are relevant to local industry
- Agent education – promote regional areas as destination of choice

Question 2. What are the barriers to regional destinations and their education institutions hosting more international students?

- Lack of information and promotion – students are unlikely to commit to study somewhere they have not heard of. Improve regional destination marketing. Advantages of living in regional areas – ie community engagement, Australian culture.
- Not enough proven success stories – students are unlikely to “take a chance” when such an important / expensive decision is being made.
- Most students are from large cities. Small town life is not appealing.
- Limited job opportunities
- Lack of entertainment options / activities
- Isolation – no support group / others from their country
- Locals may be closed minded / not welcoming
- Regional areas may not be able to accommodate large numbers of international students.
- Scope of program delivery not as diverse.

Question 3. How can metropolitan and regional education institutions work together to create regional study opportunities for international students in ways that benefit the students, the regional communities and the institutional partners?

- Marketing campaign promoting regional areas
- Study tours / Agent tours / Delegations – showcase regions
- Scholarships
- Create packages / study tours that encourage groups of students to open their eyes to what opportunities are available.
- Work experience / excursions / community engagement
- Institutions such as TAFE with multiple campuses could offer semester rotations in courses

that are available in multiple locations.

- Create partnerships with local industry to find job opportunities.
- Programs that include internships or work experience particularly in skills shortage areas.
- Offer study in Queensland whole packages that include tuition fees, airport transfers, work placement, accommodation extra-curricular activities etc that is all organised prior to departure.
- Free activities to encourage community engagement, making friends and building networks
- Dual qualifications program that allows students transfer from metropolitan to regional institutes and get two qualifications

Question 4. What are the best ways to communicate the benefits of spending time in regional Australia to prospective international students and their parents?

- Student testimonials and videos (ie ‘a day in the life...’)
- Successful migration stories
- Testimonials from the community and homestay providers in the regional locations that are attracting students already to demonstrate the appreciation of what International students bring to their communities (financially and culturally)
- Social media / marketing campaign with a focus on: safety, friendly, affordable, picturesque, quality of life, real Australian culture etc.
- Incentive for education agents placing students in regional areas

Question 5. Given the strong interplay between tourism and education, particularly in regional settings, how can government, institutions and the community capitalise on the relationship, map its value and promote regional strengths?

- Travelling ELICOS – teacher / travel guides – Tourism packages promoted overseas that include learning the language. Not a “Study Tour” as they are predominantly classroom based. These programs are learning on the go.
- Study Qld to ensure regional areas are as heavily promoted as metro areas.
- Provide regional migration opportunities/benefits like Western Australia is doing.
- Launch a joint Marketing campaign promoting the regions as a destination with all the options/advantages in relation to study, work, social, travel, immigration.
- Consider changing the terminology depending on the market. Ie – Students from China have suggested that “Regional” sounds like it is a less attractive or appealing place to live.

Question 6. What role could fee structures and scholarships, education agent promotions, and changes to government policy settings play to encourage more students to study in regional Australia (e.g. migration incentives)?

- Important/necessary role. It is unlikely things will change without above interventions
- Higher agent incentives for regional placements
- Additional migration points:
 - Study and living in regional areas – additional points for longer duration
 - Students who stay in regional areas post-graduation to mentor new international students
- Programs to have 2 advertised prices – metro fee vs regional fee (discounted)
- Increased work hours permitted on student visas for students in regional areas
- Longer 485 visa duration for students remaining in regional areas post-graduation
- Endeavour scholarship – special category for regional areas

Question 7. Is there a need for greater insights into the motivations and the experience of international students in regional areas relative to metropolitan areas, using instruments such as the International Student Barometer and/or other targeted research?

- Yes. If the survey instrument is designed to pull real Good News Stories. Maybe a competition or award that encourages regional students to nominate (tell their story).
- Survey responses may vary depending on market. Enable a more targeted marketing campaign for different countries.
- Survey on work experience /employment opportunities and outcomes would also be beneficial

Question 8. Any other comments?