



Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

Promoting Regional Education Services Integration: APEC University Associations Cross-Border Education Cooperation Workshop

20 – 22 May 2014, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Discussion Summary

1. We, officials, representatives and experts from university associations, universities, and governments of 13 APEC economies (Australia; Canada; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Japan; Korea; Malaysia; Papua New Guinea; The Philippines; Singapore; Thailand; Viet Nam; and the United States) met in Kuala Lumpur on 20 – 22 May 2014 to consider opportunities and options for implementing the 2012 APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration on Promoting Cross-Border Education Cooperation.
2. The 2012 APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration on Promoting Cross-Border Education Cooperation instructs Ministers and officials to take forward priorities on cross-border student, researcher and education provider mobility to develop cross-border education cooperation in the APEC region while taking into consideration the circumstances of individual economies.
3. We considered each of the topics from three perspectives: best practices in cross-border education; challenges faced by students, researchers and providers; and innovative ideas to enhance cross-border education.

Enhancing the mobility of students

4. We recognised that there is much excellent practice in student mobility among APEC economies, noting the importance of building on current best practice while supporting and recognising the many forms of student mobility, including virtual mobility.
5. We acknowledged that the differing capacity of APEC economies to support and fund student mobility will require closer cooperation across economies to establish scholarship funds and similar arrangements to support students from less wealthy backgrounds to experience the benefits of cross-border mobility. Cost sharing and reciprocal arrangements between universities in different economies can help minimise barriers to student mobility, such as tuition fees and living expenses.
6. We noted the importance of an emphasis on 'brain circulation' rather than 'brain drain' when students are mobile. This can be supported by a focus on joint training programmes and shorter term exchange where students gain international exposure without needing to leave their home for extended periods of time.
7. We considered that credit transfer could better be interpreted as credit sharing, and that it is important that APEC economies share experiences on credit recognition to enhance efficiency. Mutual recognition of credits and programmes would significantly enhance student mobility. Education institutions could

nominate particular courses and / or programmes to become APEC recognised courses, facilitating efficiencies in credit mobility.

8. We recognised that collecting data on all forms of student mobility is important in informing strategies for future work and activities. It will require agreement around definitions, as well as the development of protocols around data capture, use and dissemination. It will be important to build data collection through research to capture outcomes and impacts on careers and the strengthening of relationships between APEC economies.

Enhancing the mobility of researchers

9. We recognised that mobility of researchers is difficult to enumerate as it occurs in a range of capacities, with researchers being mobile via formal mobility schemes as well as through individually-organised endeavours and collaboration on joint publications. However, little is known about the overall scale and impact of researcher mobility. Cross-economy cooperation can reinforce efforts to further stimulate joint research work across APEC, including the pooling and equitable access to resources.
10. We noted that the ASEAN research cluster is a best practice example of regional cooperation in how to address common problems through carefully targeted and planned research strategies and is an approach which could be considered by APEC economies.
11. We considered that the creation of an 'APEC Researcher Travel Card', as an additional element of the APEC Business Travel Card, would greatly enhance the mobility of researchers.
12. We considered that a future workshop on researcher mobility would be of value, that would include industry partners and research organisations.
13. We recognised the particular importance of providing support for the mobility of female researchers.

Enhancing the mobility of education providers

14. We recognised that there is much successful provider mobility among APEC economies but persistent challenges remain.
15. We considered the benefit of removing the reference to 'branch' campuses, instead preferring to emphasise the two-way flows of knowledge and skills, and the mutual benefits for host economies and sending economies.
16. We noted that variations in regulations in APEC economies remain a barrier to provider mobility, and encourage further development of APEC-wide collaborations on issues such as qualifications frameworks.
17. We noted that education providers who wish to establish themselves in other APEC economies need to recognise the importance of making a long-term commitment.

Beyond mobility – enhancing virtual Cross-Border Education

18. We recognised the significant and growing unmet demand for university education in many APEC economies. We noted the role of open educational resources in expanding access to university education and reducing the cost of access.
19. We considered the opportunities for using creative commons licences to share learning resources and research outputs among APEC economies.
20. We acknowledged the value in harnessing technology to enable more fluid exchange of skills and knowledge and to enable the interaction of students and researchers across large distances, particularly to the benefit of otherwise marginalised groups.
21. We recognised the opportunity for APEC economies to share regulatory approaches to online and virtual forms of education.