

## International students in the ELICOS sector in 2015

This snapshot provides an overview of international students studying English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) in Australia in 2015. The Department of Education and Training's international student data on enrolments and commencements relate only to international students studying in Australia on a student visa. The English Australia (EA) survey of English language studies in 2015 provides information about ELICOS students on all temporary visas, not just student visas. Findings of the EA survey are weighted against data from the department to provide a useful picture of the make-up of the total ELICOS student population. For a more current count of ELICOS enrolments by student visa holders, please refer to the department's international student data.

In 2015, the EA survey showed that ELICOS student enrolments grew by 4 per cent to 170,628 students (from 163,542 in 2014). The majority of the students studying ELICOS were on student visas (66%) followed by visitor (18%), working holiday (10%) and other (6%) visas (Figure 1)<sup>1</sup>. In comparison to 2014, the number of students on visitor and working holiday visas declined by 2 per cent and 0.3 per cent respectively and the number of people on student visas increased by 4 per cent. The small proportion of students on Other visas increased by 49 per cent (Table 1). Figure 2 illustrates the changing shares of ELICOS students on different visa types over the last seven years.

All states experienced growth in 2015 except Queensland where enrolments declined by 2 per cent when compared to 2014. NSW remained the most dominant state with a 39 per cent share of ELICOS students followed by Victoria (25%), Queensland (23%), Western Australia (10%) and SA (3%).<sup>2</sup> The highest rate of growth was in WA (15%).

### Nationality

In 2015, the ELICOS sector continued to draw most of its students from the Asia-Pacific (68%, an increase from 66% in 2014). Students from China accounted for 21 per cent, making it the largest source country of all ELICOS students in 2015. The remaining top ten nationalities in order were: Japan, South Korea, Brazil, Thailand, Colombia, Taiwan, India, Vietnam and Italy. The top ten source countries together accounted for 76 per cent of ELICOS students in 2015. Six of the top ten source countries showed increases in the number of enrolments in 2015 compared to 2014.

Of these top ten source countries, 81 per cent of Chinese students held a student visa. Half of Japanese students were on visitor visas which remain the most popular visa type for Japanese students. The working holiday visa was the most popular visa for students from South Korea (42%). The majority (ranging from 82% to 92%) of students from other top nationalities held student visas in 2015.

### Duration of study

In 2015, there was a slight increase in student weeks overall by 0.1 per cent. The average course length of study declined from 12.9 to 12.4 weeks. ELICOS students on student visas had a higher average number of study weeks than those on any other visa types. Nonetheless, the average length of study for student visas declined from 16.3 to 15.3 weeks between 2014 and 2015. The average length of study for all other visas increased slightly, compared with 2014. The increase for visitor visa holders was from 4.8 to 4.9 weeks, for working holiday visas from 8.1 to 8.4 weeks and for other visas, the increase was from 8.1 to 9.8 weeks.

Figure 1. ELICOS students by visa type in 2015

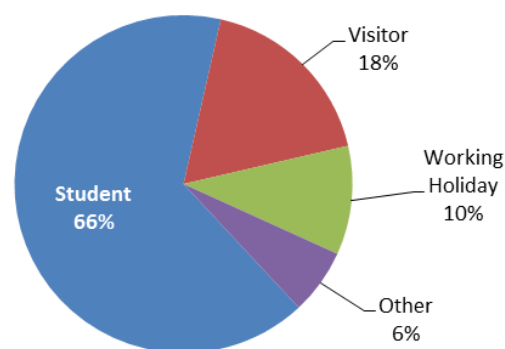


Figure 2. ELICOS students by visa types 2008 - 2015

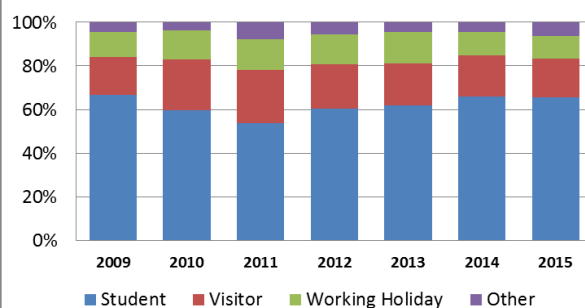


Table 1: ELICOS student number by visa types, 2014-2015

Visa Type	2014	2015	% Growth 2014
Student	107,610	111,740	3.8%
Visitor	30,897	30,401	-1.6%
Working Holiday	17,840	17,786	-0.3%
Other	7,195	10,701	48.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>163,542</b>	<b>170,628</b>	<b>4.3%</b>

1. The data for small states were combined with large states i.e. NSW/ACT, VIC/TAS, QLD/NT

2. Examples of other visas include temporary relative or spouse visas and bridging visas.