

Offshore delivery of Australian higher education courses

Many students from around the world study Australian higher education courses without coming to Australia. For an example, an Australian university may have campuses in one or more countries outside Australia, or deliver courses in partnership with foreign institutions, or offer courses online. This snapshot outlines these different modes of offshore education in the higher education sector. The data is sourced from the Australian Higher Education Statistics collection and is largely limited to students studying courses recognised in The Australian Qualifications Framework.

In 2016, there were 391,136 international students studying Australian higher education courses. Around 29% of those students were studying offshore. Of these, 40,130 students were enrolled in offshore programs provided at 14 offshore Australian university campuses¹, 64,581 were enrolled in programs delivered through partnerships between Australian and foreign institutions and a further 7,707 were enrolled in distance education (see Table 1).

Level of study and field of education

The most popular qualifications for offshore students in 2016 were Bachelor (65%) and Masters by coursework (22%) degrees (Figure 1). The most popular broad fields of education were: Management & Commerce (57%), Engineering & Related Technologies (10%), Society & Culture (8%) and Information Technology (7%).

Age and Gender

There was little difference in age and gender between offshore students and international students in Australia. In both cases, most were between 20 to 24 years of age in 2016. There were slightly more female (52%) than male (49%) students offshore. In contrast, there were more male international students studying in Australia than females (54% and 46% respectively).

Nationality

Figure 2 shows the top five countries with the most number of students enrolled in offshore programs over the last six years from 2011 up to 2016. These top countries represent the location of institutions where students studied and not necessarily the nationalities of those students. For an example, only three quarters (76%) of students undertaking Australian university programs in Singapore were permanent residents of Singapore.

Type of attendance

While onshore international students are primarily full time students, only 74% of offshore students studied full time in 2016.

Table 1: Higher education delivery to international students

Delivery to	students		% Growth
	2015	2016	2016
International students in Australia	253,757	278,718	9.8%
Students at offshore campuses	40,502	40,130	-0.9%
Students in offshore partnership programs	60,899	64,581	6.0%
Students offshore in distance education	8,140	7,707	-5.2%
Sub-total of all offshore students	109,541	112,418	2.6%
Grand total	363,298	391,136	7.7%

Figure 1: Offshore students by level of study, 2016

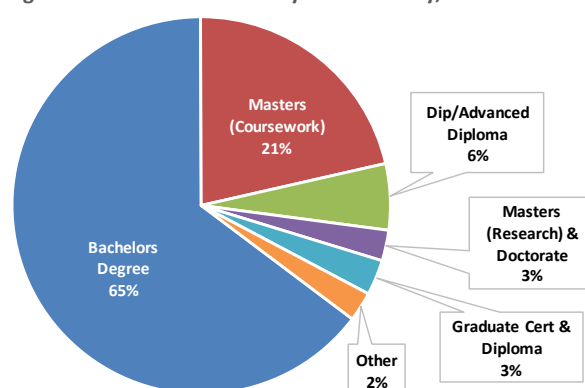
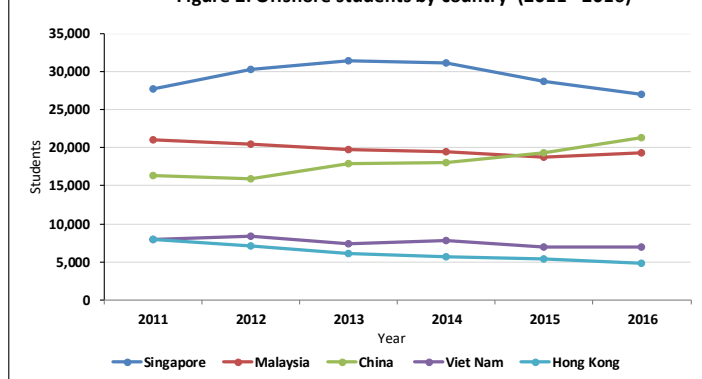


Figure 2: Offshore students by country (2011 - 2016)



¹ Curtin University (Malaysia, Singapore & UAE), James Cook University (Singapore), Monash University (India, Italy, Malaysia & South Africa) Murdoch University (Singapore & UAE), University of Newcastle (Singapore), University of Wollongong (UAE), RMIT University (Vietnam x 2), Swinburne University (Malaysia).

This snapshot uses data from the Student 2016 Full Year: *Selected Higher Education Statistics*, Department of Education and Training sourced from the University Statistics Unit at: university-statistics@education.gov.au. A comprehensive set of data tables from the series covering domestic and overseas students are published at: <https://www.education.gov.au/selected-higher-education-statistics-2016-student-data>

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