



Australian student mobility in the higher education sector

The most current UNESCO data indicates that in 2010, there were 10,330 Australian students enrolled in tertiary courses in other countries, an increase of 3.6% on the previous year. This statistic only counts Australians enrolled for more than 12 months in an offshore institution and does not include data from some significant study destinations, such as China.

The UNESCO data also shows that US student mobility declined by 3.2% in 2010, while UK mobility increased by 0.9% (Figure 1). When expressed as a proportion of all Australian higher education students, the proportion of mobile Australian students (0.8%) is similar to the UK (0.9%) and India (1.0%), and is higher than the USA (0.3%)¹ (Figure 2).

UNESCO data indicates that the top six host countries for Australian students in 2010 were the USA, New Zealand, the UK, Germany, France and Japan (Figure 3).

Enrolment data from the Australian Higher Education Statistics Collection indicates that in 2010, 518 and in 2011, 580 Australian students were enrolled in an offshore campus of an Australian higher education institution².

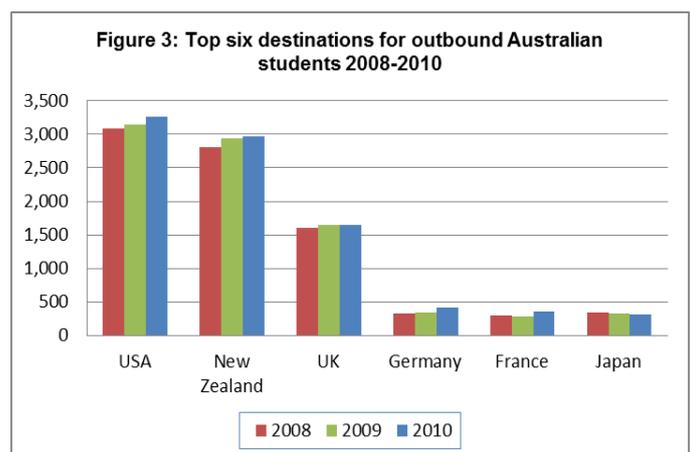
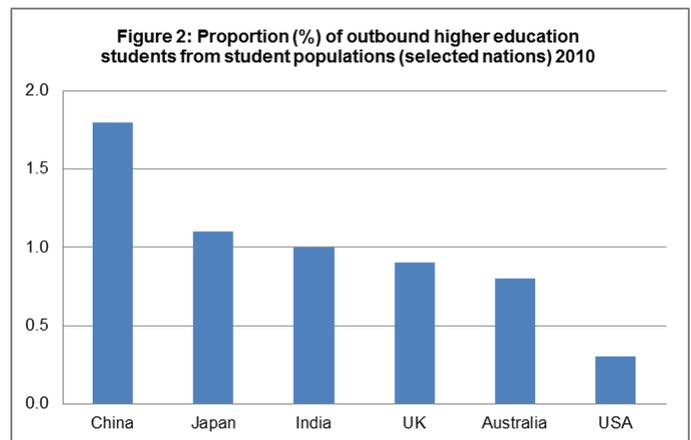
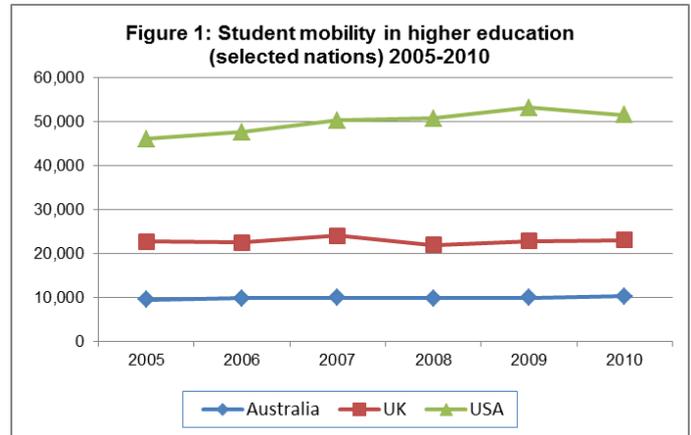
A recent Australian university survey found that in 2011, 12.3% of completing Australian undergraduate students enrolled onshore in Australian universities had undertaken an international study experience during their course, up from 12.0% in the previous year. An equivalent figure for US undergraduates in 2009/10 was 9.5%³. In 2011, a total of 20,906 international study experiences at all levels were reported by the 36 universities that participated in the survey. This was a 14.0% increase on the number of experiences reported in 2010. This statistic counts all international study experiences, including those of less than 12 months.

Support for Australian student mobility

The Australian Government allocates approximately \$36 million annually to support the mobility of Australian students through Endeavour Awards⁴ and a range of international student mobility programs⁵ including: study overseas short-term mobility program, international student exchange programs (ISEP) for the higher education sector, VET outbound mobility program and bilateral student mobility projects under Australia-European Union Education Cooperation⁶. In addition, a new initiative through the Australia in the Asian Century White Paper, \$37 million Asia bound grants program was announced late last year to encourage more Australian tertiary students to study for part of their degree in Asia⁷.

The Overseas Study Higher Education Loans Program (OS-HELP) provides loans for Australian higher education students studying overseas in the course of a degree undertaken with an Australian education provider. Total student loans provided through OS-HELP have increased from \$22.6 million in 2010 to \$25.3 million in 2011⁸. The number of recipients has also increased in the same time, from 4,086 to 5,035⁹.

In addition, Australian education providers offer support, including scholarships, for students to undertake study overseas. In 2011, 36 Australian universities provided \$28.2 million for students to undertake international study experiences³.



1. UNESCO data used in this snapshot is from <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Library/Documents/global-education-digest-opportunities-lost-impact-grade-repetition-early-school-leaving-2012-en.pdf> and <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/tableviewer/document.aspx?ReportId=143> Students studying in countries which did not report to UNESCO are not included.

2. Higher Education Statistics available from university_statistics@innovation.gov.au.

3. Olsen, A. (2012), 2012 Research Agenda: Australian Universities International Directors' Forum, available at: <http://cunningham.acer.edu.au/inted/AIEC2012AUIJDFResearchPaper.pdf>.

4. For more information, see <http://www.innovation.gov.au/InternationalEducation/EndeavourAwards/Pages/default.aspx>.

5. For more information, see <http://www.innovation.gov.au/InternationalEducation/InternationalStudentMobility/Pages/default.aspx>.

6. For more information, see <http://www.innovation.gov.au/InternationalEducation/InternationalStudentMobility/Pages/AustraliaEuropeanUnionEducationCooperation.aspx>.

7. For more information, see <https://aei.gov.au/International-network/Australia/AsiaBound/Pages/AsiaBound-Grants-Program.aspx>.

8. For more information see <http://www.innovation.gov.au/HigherEducation/StudentSupport/Pages/default.aspx>.

9. DIISRT Annual Report 2011-12, page 64, <http://www.innovation.gov.au/AboutUs/CorporatePublications/AnnualReports/Pages/AnnualReport201112.aspx>