



Transnational education in the higher education sector

Transnational education is the provision of education to international students by Australian providers offshore. For example, an Australian university may have campuses in one or more countries outside Australia. International students may be enrolled at an offshore campus for the entire duration of their qualification, or for just a part (e.g. a semester or less). This snapshot analyses the provision of transnational education in the higher education sector between 2009 and 2011.

In 2011, there were 332,577 international students studying in Australian higher education institutions. Of these, 80,458 were enrolled offshore in campuses overseas (see Table 1). This represents 24% of all higher education international students.

Age

The majority of offshore international students in 2011 were aged between 19 and 22 (see Figure 1). Onshore international students tended to be slightly older, with the majority aged between 20 and 24.

Nationality and Gender

The top five nationalities for offshore higher education provision were Singapore, Malaysia, China, Vietnam and Hong Kong (see Figure 2). This is relatively different to the top five nationalities (China, Malaysia, India, Hong Kong and Vietnam) represented in enrolments onshore in Australia. Around 52% of offshore international students were females and 48% were males. Conversely, more males were studying onshore than females (51% and 49% respectively).

Level of study and field of education

The top levels of study for offshore higher education students in 2011 were Bachelor degree (78%) and Masters degree by coursework (15%). The top broad fields of education were Management and Commerce (61%), Information Technology (8%), Engineering and Related Technologies (7%), Society and Culture (7%), and Creative Arts (5%).

Type of attendance

Students studying offshore were more diverse in their type of attendance (72% studying full-time, 28% studying part-time). In comparison, the majority of onshore students studied full-time (88%).

State

Providers from Victoria, WA and NSW had the greatest number of offshore higher education students in 2011. In comparison, Victoria, NSW and Queensland providers had the most students studying onshore in Australia.

Location	Students			% Growth	
	2009	2010	2011	2010	2011
Onshore education					
Students in Australia	220,478	230,595	224,914	4.6%	-2.5%
Students outside Australia*	25,115	28,232	27,205	12.4%	-3.6%
Sub Total	245,593	258,827	252,119	5.4%	-2.6%
Offshore education					
Students at offshore campuses	75,377	76,446	80,458	1.4%	5.2%
Grand Total	320,970	335,273	332,577	4.5%	-0.8%

* Although located outside Australia, these students were reported as receiving an onshore education service.

