



Transnational education in the higher education sector

Transnational education involves the education of students located outside Australia by Australian institutions. For example, an Australian university may have campuses in one or more countries outside Australia, or offer courses via distance education, online learning or correspondence. International students may be enrolled at a campus outside Australia 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 2011 and 2013.

In 2013, there were 328,402 international students studying in Australian higher education institutions. Of these 84,785 were enrolled at campuses outside Australia and a further 25,331 were distance education students (see table). Together, these 110,116 transnational students represent 33.5% of all higher education international students and this overall number grew by 1.9% on 2012.

Level of study and field of education

The top levels of study for transnational higher education students in 2013 were Bachelor degree (69.3%) and Master's degree by coursework (19.9%) (Figure 1). The top broad fields of education were Management and Commerce (57.8%), Engineering and Related Technologies (7.9%), Society and Culture (7.4%), Information Technology (7.0%), and Health (6.0%).

Age

The majority of transnational students in 2013 were aged between 19 and 22. International students studying in Australia tended to be slightly older, with the majority aged between 20 and 23.

Nationality and Gender

The top five home countries of students in transnational education were Singapore, China, Malaysia, Vietnam and Hong Kong (Figure 2). This reflects the nationality of students and not necessarily where they studied. In Australian university campuses in Singapore for example, 83.9% of students were permanent residents of Singapore, the remaining students were residents of other countries.

Slightly more transnational students were female (50.7%) than male (49.3%). Conversely, more males than females were studying in Australia (52.1% and 47.9% respectively).

Type of attendance

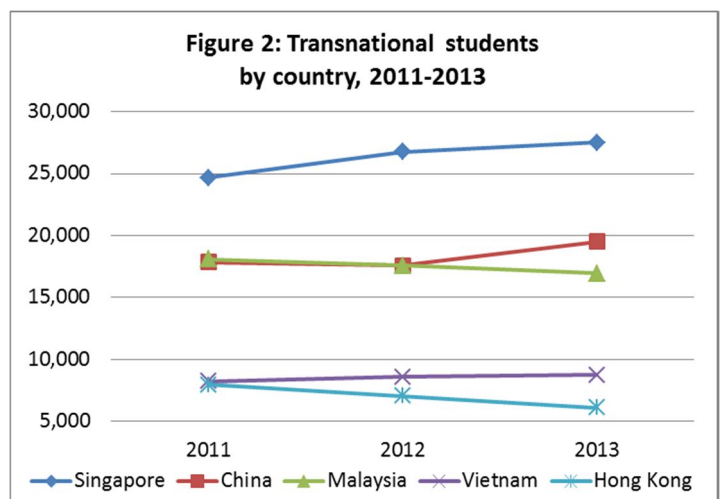
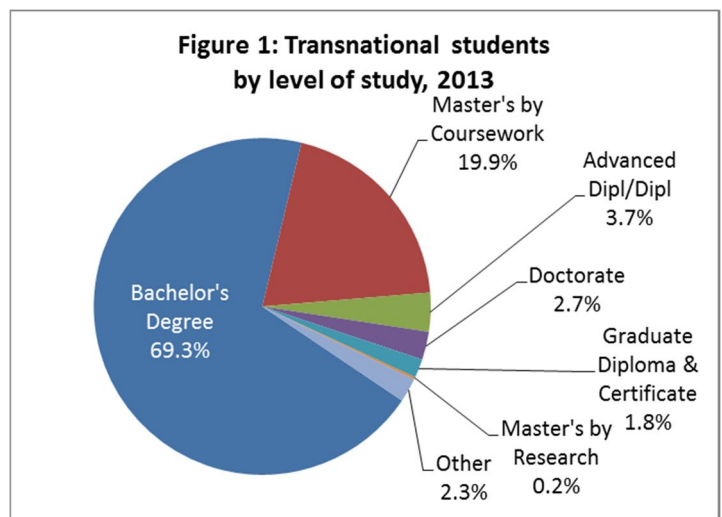
Transnational students were more diverse in their type of attendance as 71.4% studied full-time and 28.6% studied part-time. In comparison, the majority of international students in Australia studied full-time (88.9%).

State

Higher education institutions from Victoria had the greatest number of both transnational students and international students in Australia. The next largest institutions with transnational students were those from New South Wales and Western Australia respectively, while the second and third largest institutions with international students studying in Australia were those in New South Wales and Queensland.

Higher education delivery to international students					
Delivery to—	Students			% Growth	
	2011	2012	2013	2012	2013
International students in Australia	224,914	215,592	218,286	-4.1%	1.2%
Students at offshore campuses	80,458	82,468	84,785	2.5%	2.8%
Distance education students offshore*	27,205	25,552	25,331	-6.1%	-0.9%
Grand Total	332,577	323,612	328,402	-2.7%	1.5%

* includes online learning and correspondence students studying award courses.



This snapshot uses unpublished data from the *Student 2013 Full Year: Selected Higher Education Statistics*, Department of Education (2014) 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 <http://education.gov.au/selected-higher-education-statistics-2013-student-data>.

For further information about this Research Snapshot or the Research Snapshot series contact the Research and Analysis Unit by email IREsearch@education.gov.au. The Research Snapshots can be accessed from <http://internationaleducation.gov.au/research/research-snapshots/pages/default.aspx>.