



## Visa grants for international students intending to study ELICOS

Student visa data provides a useful indicator of likely future international student enrolment trends in different education sectors. However, a separate analysis is required to identify future trends in the ELICOS sector as many international students study ELICOS as part of a study pathway. In 2019, only 46% of primary student visa grantees intending to study ELICOS entered Australia on an Independent ELICOS visa, the remainder entered on other sectoral visas corresponding to the end-point of their intended study pathway (generally higher education or VET). This Research Snapshot summarises data available on all visa grants that included ELICOS in 2019. A detailed data table is [here](#) including visas granted in or outside Australia.

**Table 1: Summary of student visa grants including an ELICOS course in 2018 and 2019**

Year	Total ELICOS	% change from previous year	Independent ELICOS	% change from previous year	Pathway ELICOS	% change from previous year
2018	85,853	1%	36,495	-4%	49,358	4%
2019	84,141	-2%	39,025	7%	45,116	-9%

This analysis relies on a number of assumptions to generate the data and should be considered indicative only. All visa grants associated with an ELICOS course declined by 2% in 2019, resulting from a decline in ELICOS pathway visas (-9%), countered by growth in Independent ELICOS visas (7%). Much of the overall decline was due to an 18% decline from China as shown in Table 2, where China represented 25% of all visas with ELICOS granted in 2019. This occurred despite overall growth of nearly 1% in all primary student visa grants to China in 2019<sup>1</sup>, suggesting there is a declining interest from Chinese students to include ELICOS in a study pathway.

Visas with ELICOS granted to the rest of the world excluding China grew by 5% in 2019, despite a substantial decline (-34%) in grants to India. Like China, most visas with ELICOS granted to India in 2019 were pathway visas and their decline was in spite of a 17% growth in all primary student visa grants<sup>1</sup>, suggesting there is also a declining interest from Indian students to include ELICOS in a study pathway. Conversely, Vietnam, which also predominantly has ELICOS pathway visas, saw strong growth in both all primary visa grants (24%)<sup>1</sup> and in visas with ELICOS (31%) in 2019.

Over half of the growth seen in Independent ELICOS visas in 2019 can be attributed to Colombia, with countries such as Thailand, Spain, Saudi Arabia and Mexico also making a significant contribution. Colombia also made a small contribution to the growth in pathway ELICOS visas in 2019, which can be seen in the detailed tables [here](#) and which most likely involved study pathways from ELICOS to VET.

**Table 2: 2019 student visa grants including ELICOS - top 20 nationalities**

Nationality	Visas with ELICOS	% change from 2018	% that were pathway visas
China	21,242	-18%	97%
Colombia	11,049	20%	25%
Brazil	10,273	-5%	26%
Thailand	5,423	13%	21%
Japan	4,781	3%	19%
Spain	2,770	6%	14%
South Korea	2,758	-2%	50%
Vietnam	2,480	31%	88%
India	2,351	-34%	95%
Taiwan	2,096	6%	66%
Chile	2,016	8%	16%
Nepal	1,865	2%	92%
Saudi Arabia	1,443	32%	23%
Mongolia	976	-25%	46%
Turkey	958	29%	19%
Italy	941	-12%	25%
Malaysia	924	-13%	89%
Indonesia	861	11%	84%
France	808	10%	19%
Mexico	746	50%	21%
Other	7,380	11%	61%
<b>Total</b>	<b>84,141</b>	<b>-2%</b>	<b>54%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Calculated from the Department of Homes Affairs visa grant tables published at [data.gov.au](http://data.gov.au) for the period January-November 2019. For further information about this Research Snapshot or the Research Snapshot series contact: Research and Analysis Unit by email [IEResearch@education.gov.au](mailto:IEResearch@education.gov.au).