



Transition to Further Education by International School Students

Many international students choose to follow study pathways through the Australian education system, utilising the Australian Qualification Framework. Australian Education International (AEI) had conducted analysis of these pathways annually and published research papers¹ highlighting broad trends in international student movement within the Australian education system.

This Research Snapshot looks at international students who completed their education in the Schools sector between 2002 and 2006 and their rate of transition² to further studies in the higher education, vocational education and training (VET) and/or 'Other'³ sectors within the Australian education system. Note that the cohort completing schools studies in 2007 was not included in this analysis as some 2007 students may have yet to enrol in any further education courses during 2008.

Please note that the definition of 'completing' studies in the Schools sector is taken from the students' last school enrolment. The last school enrolment indicates that the student had completed some course of study in school but does not necessarily mean that the student was awarded a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education or equivalent. On this basis, 59% of international school students continued further education within the Australian education system upon completing school education. Of the international school students who continued further education within the Australian education system, 62% of these students enrolled their first course (i.e. immediately after their last enrolment in the Schools sector) in the higher education sector, 29% in VET and 9% in 'Others'.

States/Territories

International school students from New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia were more likely to pursue further education in Australia than those enrolled in other states and territories, with transition rates of 62%, 68% and 63% respectively. In contrast, Queensland students were the least likely to pursue further education in Australia with a transition rate of 37%.

Nationalities

China and Vietnam had the highest transition rates among the top seven nationalities at 84% and 76% respectively and were concentrated in either New South Wales or Victoria, accounting for 74% and 83% of all Chinese and Vietnamese students respectively. This is the major factor underlying the higher transition rates in these states.

The higher transition rate in Western Australia is due to the large concentration of Malaysian and Indonesian students, with transition rates at 66% and 62% respectively.

Three of the major nationalities with low transition rates, the Republic of Korea (30%), Japan (20%) and Germany (3%), were concentrated in Queensland. This is the major factor underlying Queensland recording the lowest transition rate amongst the states and territories.

The high growth rates of enrolments from China and Vietnam in the Schools sector in recent years (19% and 42% respectively in 2007) and their high transition rates suggest that the average transition rate nationwide is likely to increase in the near future.

International students' rates of transition upon completing school studies between the years 2002 and 2006, by state and nationality

State/ Territory	Student numbers	Students doing further education	Rate of transition	Nationality [#]	Student numbers	Students doing further education	Rate of transition	2007 Schools enrolments	Schools enrolment annual growth on 2006
NSW	15,193	9,425	62.0 %	China	21,216	17,774	83.8 %	11,379	18.7 %
VIC	14,087	9,553	67.8 %	Republic of Korea	5,575	1,653	29.7 %	5,659	13.8 %
QLD	8,741	3,283	37.6 %	Vietnam	954	727	76.2 %	1,742	42.2 %
WA	4,959	3,142	63.4 %	Hong Kong	2,363	1,708	72.3 %	1,544	-6.2 %
SA	3,342	1,935	57.9 %	Japan	3,337	664	19.9 %	1,305	-9.4 %
ACT	1,027	604	58.8 %	Germany	1,930	56	2.9 %	951	26.3 %
TAS	884	477	54.0 %	Malaysia	1,857	1,232	66.3 %	761	-0.7 %
NT	244	128	52.5 %	Other nationalities	11,245	4,733	42.1 %	5,797	1.0 %
Total	48,477	28,547	58.9 %	Total	48,477	28,547	58.9 %	27,426	11.5 %

[#] – Order of nationalities is based on their 2007 enrolment numbers in the Schools sector.

¹ – Research Papers on 'Study Pathways of International Students in Australia' available on the AEI website at >

<http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/PublicationsAndResearch/ResearchPapers/Default.htm>

² – 'Transition' is defined here as continuing further studies in the higher education, VET and/or 'Other' sectors within the Australian education system

³ – 'Other' includes study abroad, foundation, enabling and other non-award courses that do not lead to a qualification under the Australian Qualifications Framework