English Australia

Survey of major ELICOS regional markets in 2013

May 2014

ENGLISH AUSTRALIA

QUALITY | SUPPORT | ASSURANCE

Executive Summary

of a report prepared for English Australia by Environmetrics

May 2014

English Australia contact: Sue Blundell
Environmetrics contact: Philip Smith

Environmetrics Pty Limited

PO Box 512 Broadway NSW 2007

Tel: +61 1300 802 446

Email: philip@environmetrics.com.au

ABN 61003546192

English Australia

PO Box 1437 Darlinghurst NSW 1300

Tel: +61 2 9264 4700

Email: easec@englishaustralia.com.au

www.englishaustralia.com.au

ABN 90 087 690 408

Australian Government
Australian Education International

The English Australia Survey of Major Regional Markets for ELICOS Institutions 2013 is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian Education International (AEI), as part of its policy to provide data and research on international education. AEI manages Australian Government international education policy and is the international education arm of the Department of Education. For further information, please visit the website www.education.gov.au or www.aei.gov.au.

Introduction

This is the eighteenth survey of the ELICOS sector commissioned by English Australia. A benchmark study was commissioned in 1996, which covered enrolment statistics for the previous calendar year. A follow-up study was conducted in 1997. Austrade undertook these two studies. This current study is the sixteenth undertaken by Environmetrics and covers enrolments for the 2013 calendar year.

The purpose of the study is to gain a clear picture of the number of overseas students and visitors who undertook English language studies in Australia in 2013. Particular attention was taken to obtain statistics on:

- student numbers by nationality;
- student numbers by visa type;
- numbers of individual and group enrolments;
- length of enrolments; and
- enrolments in each state or territory.

This report presents the main findings of the study. Data is analysed to provide an overall profile of the ELICOS sector, as well as a profile for Asia Pacific, Europe, the Americas and the Middle East & North Africa.

Executive Summary

Total enrolments (all nationalities, individuals and groups)

- Following four consecutive years of declining numbers, 2013 showed a strong return to growth across all key measures. Student enrolments increased +19% on the previous year and course weeks increased by +25%, with the average length of course increasing from 12.3 weeks to 12.9 weeks. Export earnings also grew, with the sector generating $1.845 billion which was +26% higher than the $1.462 billion generated in 2012, resulting in an average spend per student of $12,484.

- In 2013 ELICOS student enrolments grew +19% to 147,828 students from 124,603 in 2012. This is the third highest level of annual enrolments ever recorded. The ELICOS market previously peaked in 2008 with 162,114 enrolments after growing consistently over a five year period from 78,338 in 2003.

- In 2013 there were increases across all major visa types, with Student visas increasing by +21% (+16,006), Visitor visas by +13% (+3,160) and Working Holiday visas by +25% (+4,303). The Other visa category was the only one to show a small decline of -3.6% (-244).

- The visa profile of the market only changed slightly in 2013. With the increase in Student visas, this category now accounts for 62% of the total, slightly higher than the 61% recorded in 2012. Visitor visas accounted for 19% of ELICOS students in 2013, Working Holiday visas for 15% and Other visas for 4%.

- The average length of study increased from 12.3 weeks in 2012 to 12.9 weeks in 2013, the longest ever recorded. This increase was seen across all visa types except Visitor visas which remained stable at 4.9 weeks. The average course length for Student visas increased to 16.8 weeks, Working Holiday visas to 8.6 weeks and Other visas to 7.6 weeks. The average course length ranged from a low of 4.1 weeks for students from the Asia Pacific region on Visitor visas, to a high of 21.1 weeks for students from the Middle East and North Africa region on Student visas.

- The increase in the number of students combined with the increase in the average course length led to a much stronger increase of +25% in the number of weeks studied, growing from 1,530,991 in 2012 to 1,912,013 in 2013.

- The total economic impact increased from $1.459 billion in 2012 to $1.845 billion in 2013 (a +26% increase).

- The growth in student enrolments was driven equally by the three main source regions, with Asia Pacific growing by +20% (+15,967), Europe by +19% (+4,007) and the Americas by +19% (+3,311). The Middle East and North Africa region was the only one to show a small decline of -1.3% (-86). Sub-Saharan Africa increased the number of enrolments but on a small base.

- The regional share profile of the market only changed slightly in 2013. Asia Pacific remained the largest source of enrolments, accounting for 64% of the total (a small increase from 63% in 2012). Europe's share remained stable at 17%, as did the Americas with 14%. The share for the Middle East and North Africa region declined slightly from 5% to 4% in 2013.

- In 2013 all states experienced growth. Victoria had the strongest growth with +38% (-8,412), followed by Queensland +27% (+8,634) and Western Australia +21% (+2,455). South Australia +7% (+278) and NSW +6% (+3,446) experienced smaller levels of growth.

- NSW accounted for the greatest share of student enrolments in 2013 with 40%, however this was a significant fall in share compared with 45% in 2012. Queensland and Victoria were the main winners, with Queensland's share growing from 25% to 27% and Victoria's from 18% to 20%. Western Australia's share grew slightly from 9.2% to 9.5% whilst South Australia's share slipped slightly from 3.2% to 2.9%.

- Asia Pacific was the most important source region for all states. China is the most important source country for NSW, Victoria, Western Australia and South Australia. Japan is the most important source country for Queensland.

- The top ten source countries for 2013 were (in order): China, Japan, South Korea, Brazil, Thailand, Colombia, Taiwan, Vietnam, Italy and Saudi Arabia. The top seven all retained the same positions as in 2012. Saudi Arabia replaced Switzerland in the top 10.

- China was the major source country in 2013 with 17% of ELICOS student numbers, though share dropped 1% from 18% in 2012. Japan and South Korea were the next most important source counties contributing 12% each, with Brazil contributing 7% of all student enrolments.

- China showed good growth in 2013 of +11% (+2,487). 88% of Chinese students have a Student visa, with small numbers holding Visitor and Other visas.

- Japan maintained second place in the top ten in 2013 with growth of +8% (+1,374). The Visitor visa remains the most popular visa type for Japanese students with 51% choosing this option. 23% choose Student visas and another 23% choose Working Holiday visas. Japan saw the strongest growth in Visitor visas with +15% (+1,247).

- South Korea also maintained its place in third position in the top ten with growth of +6% (+1,055). Numbers from South Korea plateaued for three years from 2006-2009 at around 25,000 and then declined to a low of 16,398 in 2012. 2013 is the first year of growth in South Korean ELICOS enrolments since this decline commenced. The Working Holiday visa remains the most popular visa type for South Korean students with 45% choosing this option. 37% choose Student visas and another 16% choose Visitor visas. South Korea saw the strongest growth in Visitor visas with +20% (+1,320).

- In 2013 the top 3 accounted for 41% of ELICOS enrolments, a decline from the 44% recorded in 2012, reflecting the growing diversity of enrolments. 75% came from the top ten source countries.

- All of the top ten countries showed growth in 2013.

- The strongest growth in terms of student numbers came from Vietnam, Taiwan, China and Thailand, with the strongest growth in weeks coming from Vietnam, Brazil, Thailand and Colombia.

- The strongest decline in student numbers came from Switzerland and Kuwait, with the strongest decline in weeks and revenue coming from Kuwait and Libya.

- Numbers of group enrolments grew in 2013 by 21% (+1,849), maintaining the same proportion (7%) of total enrolments. The average course length for Group enrolments increased slightly to 4.3 weeks from 3.8 weeks in 2012. In terms of course weeks, however, Groups only contributed 2.4% of the total.

- Asian nationalities again dominated group enrolments, contributing 92% of the total (increasing from 89% in 2012). Japanese students made up 49% of group enrolments (up from 47% in 2012).

- English Australia member colleges accounted for 83% of total enrolments.

Asia Pacific (individuals and groups)

- Total numbers of enrolments for the Asia Pacific region increased from 78,893 in 2012 to 94,860 in 2013. This represents an increase of +20% (+15,967).

- All major source countries showed increasing numbers of student enrolments, with the strongest growth coming from Vietnam (+3,133), Taiwan (+2,650), China (+2,486) and Thailand (+2,427).

- For the sixth consecutive year China was the most important source country in the Asia Pacific region, contributing 26% of the region's total enrolments. Japan contributed 19%, with South Korea contributing 18%.

- In 2013 NSW share of enrolments from the Asia Pacific region declined from 45% to 39%. Queensland share increased from 24% to 27%, with Victoria also increasing from 19% to 23%. Western Australia remained stable at 8%, while South Australia decreased slightly from 4% to 3%.

- The proportion of Student visas grew to 61%, with Visitor visas decreasing to 19%, Working Holiday visas remaining stable at 17% and Other visas declining to 3%.
- Total student weeks increased from 964,254 to 1,205,811 in 2013 (+25%), with the average number of weeks spent studying increasing to 12.7 (from 12.2 in 2012).
- China (30%) and South Korea (16%) accounted for the largest number of student weeks in 2013.
- Total estimated spending of students from the Asia Pacific region was $1,187 million compared with $954 million in 2012. This is an overall increase of +24% from 2012.

Europe (individuals and groups)

- Total numbers of enrolments from Europe increased from 21,099 to 25,107 in 2013. This represents an increase of +19% (+4,007).
- The largest increase in the number of enrolments for an individual nationality was Italy (+1,478), followed by France (+611) and then Spain (+492). Switzerland was the only European country to experience a decline (-364).
- In 2013 Italy contributed the greatest share of enrolments, accounting for 22% (up from 19% in 2012). Italy overtook Switzerland in 2012 and is now the most important source country for Europe. Swiss enrolments accounted for 14% (down from 19% in 2012), followed by French enrolments with 13% and Spanish enrolments with 11%.
- In 2013 NSW share of enrolments from Europe declined slightly from 51% to 49%. Queensland share also declined slightly from 25% to 24%, with Victoria increasing slightly from 11% to 12%. Western Australia increased from 12% to 14%, while South Australia remained stable at 1%.
- Visitor visas no longer dominate the European market. In 2012 Student visas overtook the Visitor visa as the most frequent visa type and in 2013 Student visas now account for 41% of the market (up from 40%) with Visitor visas dropping to 31% from 35%. The proportion of Working Holiday visas has increased in 2013 to 22% from 19%, with Other visas increasing slightly to 6% (from 5% in 2012). The decline from Switzerland and the growth from Italy and Spain have driven these changes.
- The total number of weeks enrolled has increased from 191,047 to 247,975 in 2013 (an increase of +30%). This increase in weeks was generated by the growth in student numbers combined with the average length of course increasing from 9.1 weeks to 9.9 weeks.
- Total estimated spending of European students was $214.7 million compared with $162.3 million in 2012. This is an overall increase of +32% from 2012.

Central & South America (individuals and groups)

- Total numbers of enrolments from Central & South America increased from 17,247 to 20,558 in 2013. This represents an increase of +19% (+3,311).
- Brazil again provided the largest number of enrolments, representing 49% of all enrolments from the region in 2013. The second most important source country, Colombia, accounted for 36%. The top two source countries also showed the largest growth, with Brazil growing by +21% (+1,719) and Colombia by +24% (+1,475).
- In 2013 NSW share of enrolments from Central & South America declined from 40% to 37%. Queensland share also declined slightly from 32% to 31%, with Victoria increasing from 16% to 18%. Western Australia remained stable at 11%, while South Australia increased slightly from 1% to 2%.
- 86% of all Central & South American enrolees held Student visas, with 9% arriving on Visitor visas, Other visas accounting for 5%, and Working Holiday visas accounting for less than 1% in 2013.
- There has been a strong increase of +35% in the total number of student weeks (from 246,632 to 333,954), with the average course length increasing to 16.2 (14.3 in 2012).
- Total estimated spending of Central & South American enrolees was $309.4 million compared with $209.9 million in 2012. This is an overall increase of 47% from 2012.

Middle East & North Africa (individuals and groups)

- Middle East & North Africa was the only region to decline in 2013. Total enrolments for the Middle East & North Africa decreased from 6,679 to 6,592 in 2013. This represents a decrease of -1.3% (-86).
- With significant declines from a number of countries in the region, the proportion of students from the most important source country, Saudi Arabia, grew from 54% to 59% in 2013. The most significant declines were seen from Kuwait (-284), UAE (-175) and Libya (-139).
- In 2013 NSW share of enrolments from the Middle East & North Africa declined slightly from 33% to 32%. Queensland share also declined slightly from 27% to 26%, with Victoria increasing from 22% to 25%. Western Australia remained stable at 10%, while South Australia decreased slightly from 8% to 7%.
- 81% of all enrolees from the Middle East & North Africa held Student visas, down from 82% in 2012, with Visitor visas and Other visas accounting for 9% each, and Working Holiday visas accounting for less than 1% in 2013.
- There has been a decrease of -1.3% in the total number of student weeks (from 124,485 to 122,926), with the average course length only increasing slightly to 18.7 (from 18.6 in 2013).
- The total estimated spending of students from the Middle East & North Africa was $133.3 million (up from $128.5 million in 2012). This is an overall increase +3.7% on 2012.