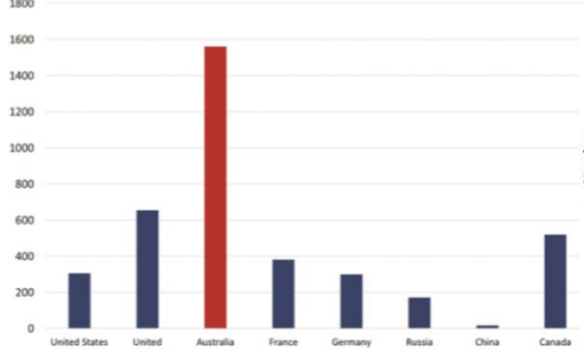




The Focus of this Study: International student dissatisfaction with skills development and graduate employability in Australia has increased. Declines in public university funding for student and careers services has led to gaps in career-readiness and graduate skills development, frustrating both international students as well as employers. Defining what skills are required by employers, understanding how universities can resource employability initiatives, structure careers operations and integrate skills development across the curriculum will assist institutions to more effectively address underlying causes of international student dissatisfaction.

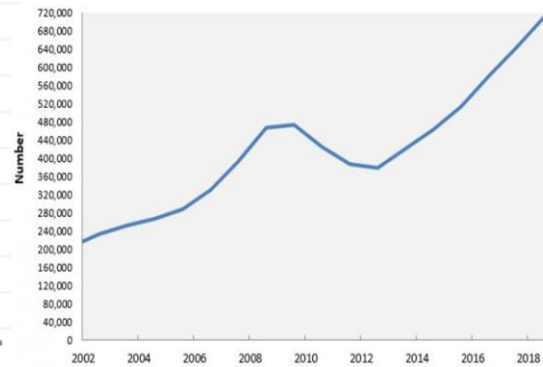
International Students per 100,000 Population



Australia enrolls more international students per capita than other countries, placing pressure on skills development and constraints on internships and work integrated learning opportunities.

Image Source: Centre for Independent Studies

University International Enrolments over 15 years



International enrolments across Australia's 37 public universities have tripled over a 15-year period, fuelled by post study work rights and residency pathways.

Image Source: Australian Department of Education

Research Questions Guiding this Study:

What is the knowledge and motivation of university careers advisors in relation to improving employability satisfaction indicators through effective skills development programs?

What are the policies, organizational structures and resourcing requirements to adequately address the delivery of employability initiatives for international students on campus?

Stakeholder Group of Focus:

An Australian public university careers advisory unit

Mixed Methods Approach:

Qualitative: (n=9)

Interviews with university careers advisors at a large public university in Australia

Quantitative: (n=57)

Survey of careers advisors across 30 Australian public universities

Areas of Dissatisfaction as Identified by International Students:

Career Readiness | Work Experience | Employability | Careers Advice

Source: i-graduate International Student Barometer 2018

Top Skills and Competencies Assessed by Australian Employers:

Communication Skills | Teamwork | Interpersonal Skills | Initiative | Resilience | Emotional Intelligence

Source: AAGE Graduate Employers Survey 2020

Initiatives with Impact (Surveyed):

Work Integrated Learning | Academic Engagement | Increased Resourcing for Initiatives and Staffing | Outsourced Internships Services | First-year student engagement

Key Components of Skills Development Initiatives (Surveyed):

Scope & Participation | Design & Quality | Discipline-specific Content | Self-Reflective Opportunities

KMO Framework (Clark & Estes, 2008)

Knowledge
Factual | Procedural

Motivation
Self-Efficacy | Utility Value

Organization
Cultural Model | Setting

7 Confirmed Influences for Careers Advisors in a University Setting

- ✓ Knowledge of effective skills development programs for international students
- ✓ Knowledge on how to design and deliver effective skills programs for international students
- ✓ Have the capacity to succeed at developing and delivering effective skills development programs
- ✓ See value in skills programs for institutional reputation and international attractiveness
- ✓ Universities should prioritize the importance of employability skills for international students
- ✓ Universities should adequately resource student careers and employability initiatives
- ✓ Coordinate key stakeholders to systematically address areas of international student dissatisfaction

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Treat employability as a core mission of the university + Undertake a review of employability and skills initiatives on campus + Engage and consult with international students to systemically address employability dissatisfaction indicators + Embed greater consistency to skills development and employability initiatives + Move Careers unit from student services to an embedded function of learning and teaching