

Australian International Education 2025

AIE
2025

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Unlocking the potential

A long-term market development strategy for Australia's international education sector

The Australian Government is developing a *National Strategy for International Education* that will support a modern, competitive and sustainable Australian international education sector. A vital component of this *National Strategy* will be the development of a long-term market development strategy for the sector to attract international students and study visitors to study in Australia and to expand Australia's education and training services offshore — *Australian International Education (AIE) 2025*.

While education and training services is already one of Australia's largest exports and contributes to Australia's economic prosperity, social advancement and international standing, demand is expected to increase over the next ten years. The international education sector has been identified as having high potential to drive Australia's future prosperity and international engagement (*Positioning for Prosperity?* Deloitte).

Unlocking that potential requires fresh thinking about international education and identifying sustainable opportunities, both onshore and offshore, that match Australia's strengths and trends in global demand.

AIE 2025 will provide Australia with a long-term market development strategy to deliver increased prosperity to Australia and its international education partners.

AIE 2025 asks the sector to explore two ambitious challenges

- › Can Australia increase, by up to double, the number of international students and visitors learning and training in Australia in a sustainable manner?
- › Can Australia substantially increase the number of people overseas learning and training via Australian-developed courses or content (face-to-face, blended learning or through digital platforms)?

Consultation workshops

The aim of these public consultations is to bring together traditional and non-traditional players in international education to engage on a range of topics, such as:

- › What are the drivers of demand for onshore and offshore international education?
- › How can the ongoing competitiveness and sustainability of Australia's traditional 'study in Australia' market be assured?
- › What can be done to grow the non-student visa international education, training and skills market in Australia?
- › How can the sector and government partners maximise Australia's transnational education (TNE), training and skills, through offshore and digital delivery models?
- › What actions can be taken to address the barriers to growth onshore and expansion offshore, including digital?
- › What features should the *AIE 2025* strategy contain?

AIE 2025: Onshore challenge

Moving towards doubling the number of international students and visitors learning and training in Australia can be achieved by maintaining Australia's annual average growth in international students on a visa (7 per cent over the last 12 years). We will, however, need to ensure that this expansion is sustainable.

A targeted diversification strategy of source markets and service delivery models will underpin the long-term sustainability of the sector. Maintaining sustained annual growth in **international students holding a visa** could involve:

- › aligning Australia's onshore education offerings to fields where its competitive advantages match demand offshore e.g. water management, international health and agriculture.
- › further segmenting Australia's developed source markets for international students e.g. 'going west in China' and 'going south in India'; developing demand for fields of studies that are most prospective for specific markets; and targeting major scholarship programs.
- › developing new markets that have the potential to be significant contributors to Australia's international student cohort by 2025, such as Sub-Saharan Africa.

Accessing the full spectrum of opportunities that exist for the sector will require Australia to think beyond the traditional definitions of an international student. A major contributor to the long-term development of Australia's onshore education and training offering will be the expansion of our engagement with **'study visitors'**:

- › 165,000 arrivals in Australia, who were not travelling on a student visa, nominated 'education' as the main reason for their stay in Australia in 2013–14.
- › non-student visa holders (predominantly visitors or working holiday makers) already comprise 40 per cent of the English language training sector.
- › over 40,000 student visas were granted in 2013–14 to people who had 'last held' a visitor or working holiday maker visa as their last Australian visa.

AIE 2025: Offshore challenge

The challenge of increasing offshore learning and training services will require Australia to consider how it can diversify its in-market activities and service delivery models, including via enabling technologies.

The TNE aspiration of *AIE 2025* is bold but reflects the massive demand that already exists and is likely to grow with a global workforce in 2030 estimated at 3.5 billion (McKinsey & Company).

This is reinforced by research undertaken by Austrade's ASEAN posts in 2011–12 which shows that there is a widening gap between skills in demand and skilled labour supplies and that this shortage is forecast to continue for the foreseeable future.

Many other economies, such as across the Middle East, South Asia, and Latin America, have ambitious plans to upskill their workers to support economic growth. Some well-developed economies, particularly in North Asia, have large-scale initiatives aimed at driving growth and productivity. These global policy imperatives present opportunities for Australian TNE.

A recent report by the World Economic Forum, *New Vision for Education: Unlocking the Potential of Technology*, examines how technology can address skills gaps.

A common challenge is the mismatch of education and training outcomes — in terms of technical and so called soft skills of leadership, management and teamwork — and the demands of industry.

TNE can comprise full Australian qualifications delivered face-to-face, as well as the delivery of Australian-based non-accredited skills and training via digital solutions. This continuum also includes the development by Australian companies of learning technologies, curricula, professional development, and English language and student testing that are exported overseas.

Continue the conversation

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