

International Education Scanning Report

August 2014



**NEW ZEALAND
EDUCATION**

ThinkNew

**Authored by Dave Guerin of
Education Directions Limited**

**If you need further information on international education please
contact:**

Business Development Team

Education New Zealand

Phone: 04 472 0788

Email: ebd@enz.govt.nz

**Disclaimer: Any views or opinions presented in this document are
solely those of Education Directions Limited and the author and do not
necessarily represent the views of Education New Zealand**

Contents

August 2014 Executive Summary	2
Markets	2
Government	2
Markets.....	3
Market Size and Value	3
Market Events	6
Transnational Education.....	7
MOOCs	8
Recruitment	8
Retention and Achievement	8
Post-Study Outcomes	9
Study Abroad.....	9
Rankings and Indices.....	10
Government	11
Overarching Strategies	11
Regulatory Issues	12
Quality Assurance	12
Transnational Education Regulation.....	13
National Scholarship and Research Schemes	13
Immigration.....	14
Political Risk.....	14

Education New Zealand (ENZ) has contracted Education Directions (ED) to provide this monthly scanning report of the international education environment. The purpose of the reports is to develop a better shared understanding of the international education industry. Reports are intended to facilitate, not lead, discussion.

Feedback is welcome - contact Dave Guerin (ED) Directions, at 0800 500 552 or dave@ed.co.nz. If you wish to contact ENZ, please contact the Business Development Team ebd@enz.govt.nz.



August 2014 Executive Summary

Markets

1. Australia led the English-speaking countries for international student enrolment growth at 11%, 3-4% ahead of NZ, the US and the UK. Canada had much lower growth at 2%.
2. Chinese postgraduate enrolments were flat in the US, after 8 years of growth. South Korean enrolments are in decline, so US institutions will be hoping Brazilian and Indian enrolments have continued strong increases. An excellent Brookings Institution study explored the origins and destinations, by cities, of foreign students in the USA.
3. Two reports on cross-border education in APEC would be useful skimming for policy-focused readers.
4. i-graduate released a comparative study of International Student Barometer results from Australia, UK and US universities. The report is useful, and is apparently the first in a wider series by i-graduate. The report identifies some opportunities for differentiation, where students value some areas and where satisfaction may be low, or highly variable.

Government

5. China announced in early 2014 that it would convert 600 universities into vocational education institutions at the bachelor degree level. A full strategy was released in June, which envisaged more involvement in vocational education by companies and private education providers. Junior high school students would also be encouraged to take up vocational, rather than higher, education pathways. The strategy provides opportunities and risks for education providers around the world, as it will affect student numbers and mix.
6. Russia liberalised its system for Indian students by allowing them to choose which university they will attend – previously they were assigned to a university by the Russian government.
7. A US accrediting agency sought to develop a global quality platform for non-institutional education providers (eg big MOOC providers).
8. The UK government revoked the licenses of 16 private colleges after an investigation into immigration fraud, while another 2 colleges surrendered their licenses.
9. South Korea proposed to ease regulations on foreign providers in the country, to help reduce imports.
10. An Australian immigration fraud from 2011 has just been exposed. Over 1,000 fraudulent visa applications were alleged to have gone through, with the support of an Australian immigration official.
11. A report funded by UK universities sought to differentiate between migrants who were good (university students) and bad (others). They drew upon solid polling of the public, but it remains to be seen how it affects political outcomes.

Markets

Market Size and Value

Country	Growth	Notes
Australia	11%	Jan-Jun 2014 compared to Jan-Jun 2013, all student visas
New Zealand	8%	Jan-Apr 2014 compared to Jan-Apr 2013, all enrolled foreign students
United States of America	8%	Jul 2014 compared to Jul 2013, F1 and M1 visas(full program of study)
United Kingdom	7%	Jun 2014 year, compared to Jun 2013 year (excludes student visitors)
Canada	2%	Q1 2014 compared to Q1 2013, all foreign students

Australia [The Austrade Education Report: A Return to Growth](#) showed 11.5% growth in Jan-Jun 2014, compared to the previous year (available [here](#) to Austrade MIP subscribers). The underlying data was also reported by Australia Education International (AEI) in its [YTD June 2014 statistics on commencements of student visa holders](#). The English language sector continued to have the highest sector growth at 28%.

AEI released [a Research Snapshot of 2013 onshore higher education international students as a proportion of all onshore students, by university, for 2013](#). The University of Melbourne, with 14,165 onshore international students (27% of all students), [had the most international students](#). Federation University Australia, previously the University of Ballarat, had the highest proportion of international students (44% of their 11,690 students).

For those seeking further detail, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection released the '[Student visa and Temporary Graduate visa programme quarterly report](#)' for the quarter ending 30 June 2014 (88 pages), and the '[Student visa and Temporary Graduate visa programme trends 2006-07 to 2013-14](#)' (58 pages). These cover applications, grant rates, processing times and other details. AEI also released snapshots on [STEM students](#), and [non-award course students](#) (foundation and exchange).

New Zealand International student enrolments in the January to April period were up 5,100 (8%) on last year, while tuition income was up 10%. Education NZ's [enrolment snapshot for Jan-Apr 2014](#) (21 pages) had the following main points.

- The PTE (13%) and ITP (9%) sectors had the strongest growth in student numbers. PTEs bounced back after a poor 2013 result, but still had fewer students than in 2011. Universities (4%) and secondary schools (5%) showed lower growth.
- Primary school enrolments (1%) grew for the first time since at least 2010. English language students also grew by 1% after declines since 2011.

- Masters courses showed high growth (13%), as did the Indian market (41%). The Indian market grew mainly for L5-7 diplomas.
- Visa statistics suggest that the upturn will be sustained, and should increase, with Jan-Jun 2014 visa approvals up 17%.

United States The US Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) released its quarterly '[SEVIS by the Numbers](#)' report for July 2014 (31 pages).

- Overall F1 and M1 student numbers were up 8.0%, but Chinese students in that group were up 15.7%, Indian students were up 17.6%, and South Korean students were down 8.5%. Exchange students were up 7.3%.
- 22 US institutions had more than 5,000 international students as at Jul 2014, while 20 Australian universities had that many students in the 2013 year. The difference in periods exaggerated the Australian result, but the comparison is still marked, given the much greater size of the US system. It shows the success of Australian institutions, but also the potential capacity of the US system.
- The University of Southern California had the most foreign students doing a full program of study at 10,498, well below the University of Melbourne (and below 4 other Australian institutions).

The Council for Graduate Schools [released data on international admissions to graduate schools in the United States](#) (34 pages).

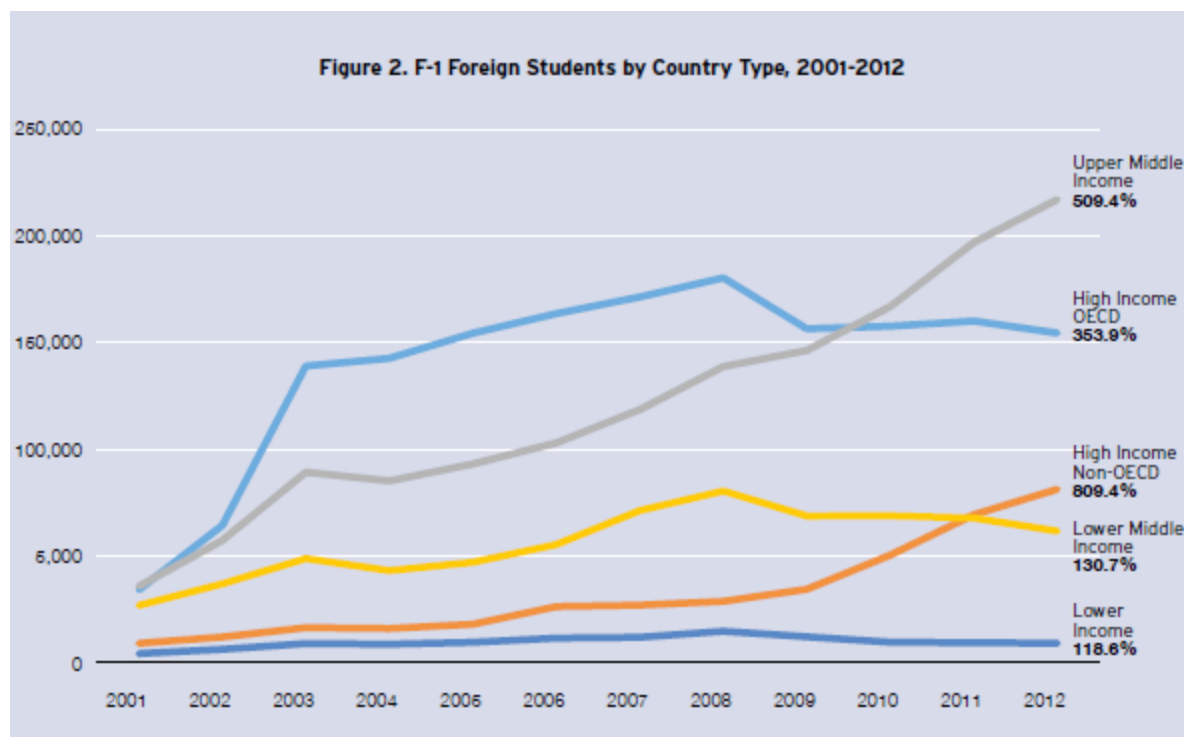
- Applications rose by 10% (2% last year) and initial offers rose by 9% (same as last year).
- Offers of admission were up the most for physical and earth sciences (13%) and engineering (11%). The lowest growth was in education (1%).
- The highest growth in admission offers was from Brazil (98%) and India (25%). There was no growth from China (for the first time in 8 years), while South Korea (-9%) was down.

The Chinese situation will concern US institutions, as that market may have reached its peak. While admission offers were flat, applications declined 1% in 2014 (after a 3% decline in applications in 2013). A Forbes op-ed [argued that the Chinese fall is no reason for concern](#), noting overall growth,

The Brookings Institution released a report titled [The Geography of Foreign Students in U.S. Higher Education: Origins and Destinations](#) (52 pages). The report is based on F-1 visa data from SEVIS, covering most students on full-time academic programs. The report was focused on students on degree programs, but it also explored the main source (94 global cities) and destination (118 US metro areas) locations of students. The report should, be essential reading for those seeking to understand the US market, and we have highlighted a few points below – similar research would be of great value for other countries attracting international students.

- Foreign student numbers grew from 110,000 in 2001 to 524,000 in 2012. This was broken down by country income band (see figure below), region and study type. Language training

showed the highest growth, from 2,000 to 165,000. Bachelors and masters study also grew quickly, while doctoral study was fairly flat.



- While major metropolitan areas near the coasts had the greatest concentrations of students, the fastest growing metro areas for 2008-2012 were in Oregon, Ohio, Alabama, and Kentucky. These were all small to medium sized metro areas with a large public university, reflecting the recent growth by such institutions around the USA.
- Most foreign students were, unsurprisingly, “from large fast-growing cities in emerging markets”. Seoul alone had 4.9% of the students from 2008-12, and spent over US\$2b. 75% of students came from metro areas of 5m people or more. The four fastest-growing cities for student numbers were from Saudi Arabia.
- Looking at the 10 home cities sending the highest proportion of STEM students to the USA, 8 were from India (the other 2 were from Iran and Bangladesh)).
- The study also looked into how many graduates worked in their university’s metro area.

Snippets

- **Canada...** released Q1 data on foreign student entries by [gender and level of study](#), and by [source country](#). Total entries were up 1.6% on Q1 2013. Students from China were up 21%, but students from the next 7 largest countries were down. The 10th largest market, Nigeria, was up 18%. University (-13%) and trade (-65%) enrolments were down, while other post-secondary (16%) and other (53%) students were up.
- **UK** The Office for National Statistics released [quarterly migration statistics for April-June 2014](#). Study-related visas granted in the year ending June 2014 rose 7%, compared to the previous year (excluding student visitors, who are under 6 months duration). Numbers were up from China (7%), Brazil (115%) and Malaysia (23%), while they were down for Pakistan (-

35%) and India (-12%). Long-term students were in decline, with a 6% drop in students intending to stay for longer than a year. UCAS statistics show [top UK universities are recruiting students from mainland Europe in record numbers](#), up 13% compared to the same period last year.

- **South Korea** ICEF Monitor argued that [the South Korean education market](#) is affected by the declining birth rate, a reduction in overseas study, and a shift of overseas study towards Asian countries.
- **Chinese School Students in USA** A [feature on Chinese school students in the USA](#) highlighted the growth in such students in recent years, their efforts to gain entry into US colleges, and a Bill that would free up public schools to enrol such students for more than 1 year.
- **Switzerland** Foreign enrolments at Swiss universities [have fallen by up to a third in the current semester following the introduction of an initiative to curb EU immigration](#).
- **Czech Republic** The number of foreign students in Czech universities [has increased rapidly over the past 10 years](#), partly because there are no tuition fees if studying in Czech (students can also study in English).

Market Events

Canadian Admissions Canadian school boards and universities [are relaxing admission criteria for international students](#) in a bid to bring in new revenue. Universities are lowering English language requirements for students who have been at local schools for 1-2 years, and one university is contributing to schools' recruitment costs.

Snippets

- **NZ Schools** New Zealand schools were considering a [proposal to set up a peak body for schools engaged in international education](#) (6 pages).
- **Investments** UAE-based Gulf Capital [invested US\\$30m in Dubai international school operator Evolve Knowledge Investments \(EKI\)](#), and Ernst & Young is [buying global strategy consultancy The Parthenon Group and expanding its Education Practice](#).
- **African Business Schools** Financial pressures and competition in more established markets [are pushing institutions to open business schools in Africa](#).
- **BC Labour Dispute** BCCIE Executive Director Randall Martin said [the ongoing teachers' strikes in British Columbia could damage 2014's intake of international students](#).
- **PTE Academic...** [opened its first test centre in the Republic of Ireland](#) as it expands internationally.
- **South Africa** ICEF Monitor looked at [the recent growth of South Africa's language school sector](#), and issues around the country's new immigration policy.
- **Canada** The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) [launched universitystudy.ca, a searchable database of Canadian higher education](#) (see [website](#)).

- **Southeast Asia** A new British Council report [recommends Southeast Asia develop a regional standard for its national university systems and create a distinctive regional higher education identity](#).
- **China** The government of Jiangsu Province [faces a backlash over plans to offer international student scholarships of 50,000 to 90,000 yuan](#), while scholarships to domestic students average 1,500 yuan.
- **Market Snapshots**...covered [Ghana](#), [Oman](#). [Middle East education agents](#) (Saudi Arabia showed the most growth), [language schools in France](#) (showing a shift from agents to the Internet for recruitment), [Canadian high schools and their agent relationships](#), [Canadian community colleges](#), and [Mongolia](#),

Transnational Education

APEC released a [report on cross-border education cooperation](#) (65 pages), covering student, researcher and provider mobility, as well as mobility without movement (eg using ICT). It isn't a must-read report, but it provides useful background on issues, case studies and possible solutions – it was intended to help prepare people for a workshop. Another [report for the Australian Dept of Education](#) (58 pages) covered similar issues to the APEC report cited above, but provided more specific data on enrolments by country.

Snippets

- **London Campus** India's Amity University, which has 100,000 students in India and abroad, [was searching for a London site for a 5,000-student campus](#) and is seeking partnerships with English universities.
- **Qatar** University College London was [accused of allowing forced labour and exploitation on the 'Education City' academic complex in Qatar](#) (the claims involved cleaners and other staff). A UK shadow minister [called for University College London to do 'all it can' to stop the practice](#).
- **Abu Dhabi** An American student [reflected on his experiences at New York University's Abu Dhabi campus](#).
- **Joint Ventures** Vietnam's government [greenlit a second partner university with Japan](#), and [Duke Kunshan University, a US-China joint venture opened in Kunshan, China](#).
- **India** The Cabinet of Kerala province has [cleared a proposal to set up an 'academic city' modelled on the Dubai Academic City](#).
- **Malaysia** The US-based Johns Hopkins University has [fallen out with a Malaysian partner](#) that it was helping to establish a medical school in Malaysia. Johns Hopkins claimed they weren't paid, while the Malaysian entity had faced serious recruitment and financial challenges.

MOOCs

- **African Virtual University** The African Virtual University, in partnership with the African Development Bank, is [launching 29 new open, distance and e-learning centres in 21 African countries](#).
- **Business Schools...** are [increasingly offering MBA programmes online](#), says Imperial College Business School's Prof G Anandalingam.
- **Spanish Provider** Leading Spanish/Portuguese language MOOC provider [Miriada X is expanding into the Latin American market](#).

Recruitment

QS released the '[Students Online: Global Trends](#)' report (24 pages) on how prospective students use digital resources to research higher education. Most survey respondents were intending masters students at QS events, so it is skewed. It's worth a quick scan, but much better research on students' online habits can be found elsewhere.

Snippets

- **USA** The US Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is partnering with CollegeWeekLive [to deliver a series of virtual college fairs to attract international students to the US](#).
- **Video Interviews** Ten top US liberal arts institutions are [collaboratively encouraging Chinese students to submit their applications with video interviews to exhibit communication skills](#). It's a sensible move.
- **Disabilities** ICEF Monitor [interviewed Life Development Institute \(LDI\) CEO Rob Crawford on supporting students with disabilities](#). It's a good overview for a complex issue.
- **United States** The National Association for College Admission Counselling [has released draft additions to its Statement of Principles of Good Practice](#) that expand on last year's change allowing member universities to use commission-based agents in international recruitment. They focus on transparency on commissions, and monitoring of agents' behaviour, with a more negative tone on agents than was seen last year.

Retention and Achievement

Barometer Report i-graduate released [Explaining International Student Satisfaction - insights from the International Student Barometer](#) (37 pages). The report can be accessed [here](#), and was based on 60,000 responses from students at 50 UK, USA and Australian universities. The broad results will be familiar to those using the ISB already,

- There was a strong correlation ($R^2=0.75$) between students' satisfaction and their willingness to recommend an institution, unsurprisingly.

- Graduate student satisfaction was positively correlated (0.26) with a university's ranking (higher rankings were associated with higher satisfaction). The association was weaker for undergraduate students (0.07).
- The ratio of students from China was correlated (0.57) with lower student satisfaction in making friends with other international students.
- Students that had no parent with a degree were correlated with lower satisfaction (0.31).

Detailed tables show how satisfaction with specific elements of the student experience correlate to students being willing to recommend the university to others (subject expertise had the lowest correlation, and the students' union the lowest). The measures are then usefully broken up into four groups for management prioritisation. As examples, improved visa advice will lead to a payoff in satisfaction and recommendations, while improved career advice would have limited effects on satisfaction and recommendations.

Looking deeper into the data, i-graduate explored the correlation between satisfaction and recommendations, the average satisfaction, and the range of satisfaction, which pointed to potential areas for university differentiation (pp.35-36).

i-graduate can draw upon an unparalleled dataset, but their analytical approach could improve. They have generally reported simple correlations between variables, rather than employing more complex techniques that could provide deeper insight and reliability. They also chose not to identify the universities they included in the study, or even their key characteristics. Still, i-graduate plans to do more work, and they can easily expand their methodology.

Snippets

- **Pastoral Care** Study Travel Magazine looked at [the importance of pastoral care to a provider's reputation](#), drawing on a wide range of perspectives.

Post-Study Outcomes

- **Taiwan** A [survey by the Foundation for International Cooperation in Higher Education of Taiwan \(FICHET\)](#) found 86% of international students in Taiwan would be willing to stay to work, and 90% would recommend Taiwan to people wanting to study Mandarin. International student numbers were apparently up 19% in 2014.
- **China** A survey by Peking University found [more than one-third of recent graduates continue to live off their parents](#), with a further 40% living pay cheque to pay cheque. It's not an international education statistic, but the state of the Chinese graduate market is important, given the number of Chinese going overseas to study.

Study Abroad

- **TYA Answers...** is [a new UK Q&A website aiming to streamline study abroad information for students](#).



- **Canadian Budget Submission** In their submission to the Canadian House of Commons Finance Committee, [the Canadian Bureau for International Education \(CBIE\)](#) ([media release](#)) pushed for 15% of Canadian students to get an overseas study experience (up from 3% now). The [Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada](#) also pushed for more international mobility for Canadian students.
- **Asian Study Tours** The Asian Institute published [an infographic on US institutions' short-term faculty-led programs in Asia](#). It's a useful overview of costs, subjects, destinations and more.

Rankings and Indices

- **Academic Ranking** Shanghai Jiao Tong University [released its Academic Ranking of World Universities 2014](#). Asian universities [showed small gains on their Western counterparts](#), while Harvard remained first for the 12th consecutive year. Griffith University's Tony Sheil says changes to the methodology for counting highly cited researchers in the Academic Ranking of World Universities [tend to favour current, rather than historical, contributions](#). The rankings are now based on research from the last 10 years, not the last 30 years.

Government

Overarching Strategies

China In June China released details of its vocational education plans at a major conference and associated events. The overall aim was to increase the skill level of the Chinese workforce, and address imbalances leading to an oversupply of higher education graduates.

- The changes follow on from a Feb 2014 decision to convert 600 existing universities into bachelor degree level vocational institutions (these will be known as universities of applied sciences). The conversion will start with pilot projects. There will be investment in staff and facilities of universities and vocational schools.
- While the central government will set various requirements, there will be considerable decentralisation in the reforms. It is intended that vocational education focuses on regional economic needs.
- Companies are expected to get involved in providing vocational education both through engagement with schools/universities, and direct provision of education. Private vocational education providers might be able to access government subsidies and student support under “equal treatment” of private and public providers. There is a goal that 80% of large and medium sized companies get involved in providing education in some way by 2020. Local businesspeople and community representatives may be able to join vocational school boards.
- Vocational education enrolments will be boosted at school and tertiary levels. This will shift the balance of junior high school students taking higher and vocational education pathways from 55:45 now to 50:50. Entry standards will also change to provide for smooth student transitions.
- Priority areas have been set for vocational education, including modern agriculture, advanced manufacturing, energy and others. Vocational education should also support Chinese companies’ global expansion.
- The National Vocational Students Skills Competition will be opened up to international participants.

The Chinese changes provide opportunities for collaboration, institutional reform, faculty training and partnerships. In time, it may also provide more space for private entry into the Chinese vocational education market.

Key documents include a [Swiss embassy review of the situation](#) (in English), a transcript from the [26 June press conference](#) (Chinese) the [2 May State Council decision on vocational education](#) (Chinese), and China Daily articles [here](#) and [here](#).

Snippets

- **Russia...** wants to [promote its education and culture in India](#), and the two countries will sign an agreement on the mutual recognition of higher education diplomas. Indian students gained work rights in Russia this year. They are also now able to choose the university they wish to attend – previously they nominated an area of study and the Russian government chose their

institution. About 1,100 Indian students a year go to Russia, 80% of them for medical education (the fees are lower than in India).

- **Gundeshapur Project** Iran and France [signed an MOU to strengthen academic cooperation and fund 30 joint academic plans](#) in various fields.

Regulatory Issues

- **Uganda** The Ugandan government has ordered all six public universities [to charge uniform fees for Ugandans and foreigners from other East African countries](#) (as is the practice in those other countries).
- **China Fees** Tertiary fees in China [are rising rapidly following the end of a government-imposed 5-year ban on tuition fee rises](#). Some fees had been frozen for over 10 years, and now have had double-digit increases. Government loan limits for students have gone up by 33% as well.
- **Indian Screening Exam** Medical graduates who studied abroad [are protesting against the Medical Council of India's "unfair screening exam"](#). There is apparently a large backlog of graduates who have not gained local approval to practise medicine. Such professional barriers in a student's home country can seriously affect the value of offshore education.
- **India** The University Grants Commission has [written to India's 16 autonomous institutes of technology and private institutions to discontinue four-year courses and conform to UGC rules](#).

Quality Assurance

MOOC QA America's Council for Higher Education Accreditation and its International Quality Group [will pilot a global quality platform to review non-institutional education providers](#). They're looking mainly at providers of MOOCs. The initiative seems to be about a traditional quality assurance organisation trying to extend its reach, rather than demand from the relevant providers for such accreditation. It seems unlikely that this specific initiative will flourish, but it's part of a developing conversation about quality assurance for new delivery methods.

UK The UK government [revoked the licenses of 16 private colleges](#) in its investigation into immigration fraud. 57 such colleges had earlier had their licenses suspended. 2 other colleges surrendered their licenses. The University of Bedfordshire was [the first institution \(of those that had visa-granting frozen\) to resume international student recruitment](#) following the Home Office's investigation into suspected exam and visa fraud. That University had some other issues, allegedly bending its academic rules to [give students sponsored by the Saudi Arabian government preferential treatment over those without sponsorship](#). The students were at risk of losing their government support if they hadn't been allowed to progress.

Snippets

- **Beijing Agencies** The Beijing Overseas Study Service Association (BOSSA) was set to [release a report from a first of its kind audit of Beijing's 71 state-licensed education agencies](#). 9 of the 71 agencies failed to pass the audit and were undergoing improvements based on BOSSA recommendations.

- **Australia** Universities Australia and the Association for Academic Language and Learning disagreed over [the extent to which English language proficiency should be emphasised as an expectation of enrolling students](#). There is an obvious economic incentive to cut corners on language proficiency, but completion rates and graduate standards usually decline as a result.
- **Irish Closure** The Business and Computer Training Institute (BCT) [became Ireland's sixth private college to close in the wake of a visa fraud scandal exposed in April](#). Further closures seem likely, as regulations are enforced, and further tightened.
- **Ireland** Following the amalgamation of four agencies (FETAC, HETAC, NQAI, IUQB) into Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), the [QQI Award identity and logo](#) has been created.

Transnational Education Regulation

South Korea... has proposed easing regulations [to enable foreign academic bodies to jointly establish schools in Korea with Korean institutes](#) ([The PIE News](#)). Visas and language tests will be made simpler for foreign students, and military service deferrals will be available for domestic students as the government seeks to reduce imports - Koreans studying abroad made up 48% of the national trade deficit in services. There are local concerns about the quality of foreign providers setting up in Korea, and the cost of such education.

National Scholarship and Research Schemes

Pakistan The European Union Education Foundation (EUEF) said it would [award around 10,000 scholarships to Pakistani students to study in Europe in 2015](#). That sounded like an unfeasibly large number, and the EU later clarified that it had [no link to the EUEF](#), and advised caution in dealing with the EUEF. The [EUEF's website](#) uses the EU's flag, along with EU and European government reports, to add credibility.

Snippets

- **Oman...** is [offering 1,746 places for students to study abroad](#), as well as 9,785 places at private educational institutions.
- **New Colombo Plan** All 10 ASEAN member states will [join Australia's New Colombo Plan from 2015](#).
- **EU Funding Cuts** The European University Association (EUA) has [warned the Council of the EU against making "considerable cuts" to proposed funding for research and innovation](#), including Horizon 2020. While funding increased this year, the budgets to meet those commitments are still to be finalised.
- **Newton Fund** The UK International Unit's [newsletter](#) examined the Newton Fund and how it will expand long-term international partnerships.

Immigration

Australian Fraud Fairfax [exposed a large-scale visa fraud operation in Australia](#), involving more than 1,000 fraudulent visa applications relating to overseas workers and students. A former immigration department official had a key role in the operation, but she fled Australia after \$0.5m was found at her home, along with immigration stamps. The raid happened in 2011, but the situation was only publicly exposed in 2014. A [report by academics](#) released at the same time argued that immigrants were being accepted above the rate that employment was growing, thereby damaging job prospects for current citizens and residents.

UK Immigration Numbers With the next election due in 2015, Universities UK published a report on [‘International students and the UK immigration debate’](#) (36 pages), with the thinktank, British Future. The report advanced the universities’ argument that international students should not be counted in any cap on migrants, drawing upon polls of the public that showed that students are the most popular type of migrants. 59% of those polled said that international student numbers should not be reduced, even if that affected the government’s overall target to reduce the number of migrants. UK Independence Party supporters were more likely to support a reduction in international students. The report also showed strong public support for international students to stay in the UK to work after graduation.

Universities UK used the report to argue not only for protection of current arrangements, but the expansion of student numbers (supported by more government-funded promotion efforts) and improved post-study work options. Overall, it is a sophisticated lobbying effort, and it was backed by [former Conservative Deputy PM Michael Heseltine](#) and current Liberal Democrat Deputy PM Nick Clegg (he also [made positive noises](#) prior to a trip to India). [The British Council’s Director of Education Marketing in China Jazreel Goh](#) and [UKCISA CE Dominic Scott](#) welcomed the report, as could be expected. It remains to be seen whether it has any impact on wider political debate.

Snippets

- **Canada...** [wants to attract talented foreign graduates](#), and will introduce an Express Entry visa system, a Start-up Visa scheme with residency for foreign entrepreneurs, and funding to improve foreign credential recognition. Other measures will allow foreign graduates from Canadian programmes to [get a job without their employer having to do a labour market impact assessment](#).
- **Tests** The UK Home Office [updated its Tier 4 Policy Guidance](#), confirming the removal of several English language tests from the approved list for immigration (see [updated guidance](#)).

Political Risk

Ebola Outbreak American universities [suspended programmes in West Africa in light of the Ebola outbreak](#), while Ghana [delayed opening its universities for the new academic year by at least two weeks](#) while it implemented measures for screening students from affected countries. Universities UK warned British universities [of a potential Ebola outbreak this September](#) as thousands of Nigerian students arrive for the new semester. University World News had a long report [on the impact of the Ebola outbreak in western Africa](#) on students abroad, universities, and affected scientists.

Snippets



- **Venezuela** Delays in foreign currency issuance mean [Venezuelan nationals are finding it increasingly difficult to organise their finances for study abroad](#). With low oil prices hitting the Venezuelan economy and currency hard, a quick resolution seems unlikely.
- **Ukraine** Indian students studying in eastern Ukraine [are to be transferred to universities in safer areas](#). Over 800 Indian students were studying in the Luhansk area, a scene of fierce fighting.
- **Russia** Economic sanctions imposed on Russia [did not appear to be disrupting Russian students' plans to study abroad](#).

Think**New**[®]



NEW ZEALAND
EDUCATION

studyinnewzealand.com enz.govt.nz