

Taiwan holds on

Taiwan's student market for mainstream education overseas remained healthy last year, despite some economic unsteadiness and an increase in education opportunities at home. International education remains a high priority for many Taiwanese students and their parents.

Despite reports of growing economic uncertainty in Taiwan, as well as reforms in domestic education provision enabling more Taiwanese students to study at home, the mainstream education travel market in Taiwan experienced an increase in bookings in the 12 months to September 2001. The higher education sector grew by 6.5 per cent, while the high school sector increased by 9.4 per cent.

The Ministry of Education in Taiwan is aiming to increase to 100 per cent the availability of higher

education places in Taiwan for high school graduates over the next few years and has already made progress in increasing the number of places and programmes available to higher

education students. Three new public universities were opened in Taipei, Chiayi and Kaohsiung in 2000, bringing the total number of

colleges and universities in Taiwan up from only 41 in 1989 to 118. Plans for this year to abolish the joint college entrance examination – a three-day examination which is currently the sole admissions indicator for higher education in

Top three university courses

1. Business
2. Education
3. Computing

Universities

Top three destinations

1. UK
2. USA
3. Australia

Average commission: 12.5%

High school

Top three destinations

1. USA
2. UK
3. Canada

Average commission: 12%



PHOTOGRAPH: MONTE VISTA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Taiwan – will also ensure that enrolment figures at Taiwanese colleges and universities continue to increase in the future.

Overall, 50 per cent of consultants reported that university bookings had increased by between 20 and 50 per cent in the 12 months to September 2001, while 20 per cent said that their numbers had remained the same and 30 per cent said that they had decreased.

Among those who reported a drop in university bookings, Taiwan's education reforms were a key factor

in the decrease, as well as the falling exchange rate of Taiwan's dollar against the US dollar, which has made studying abroad – particularly in the USA which is a top destination for Taiwanese students – significantly more expensive.

Those consultants who reported an increase in their university bookings gave the importance of foreign qualifications in the Taiwanese job market as the main reason behind the growth. Many also said that the reputation and ranking of the institution is the main consideration for their clients when choosing where to study.

Forty-five per cent of our consultants' university students took a foundation course before starting their degree, while 70 per cent of those who did, chose one at the university in which they were to study. Undergraduate courses were the most popular, with 57 per cent of our respondents' university clients going abroad for undergraduate

Key Facts

Ten consultants took part in our Consultants' Report

The combined total number of students placed in universities by our respondents was 1,197 in the 12 months to Sept 2001

The combined total number of students placed in high schools by our respondents was 577 in the 12 months to Sept 2001

Commission rates ranged from 10 to 20 per cent

70 per cent of our respondents charged their clients a handling fee

40 per cent of our respondents placed more than 100 students in mainstream education in the 12 months to Sept 2001

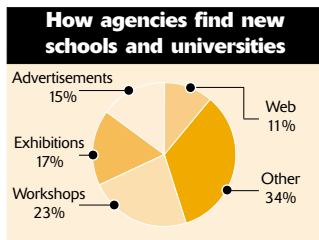
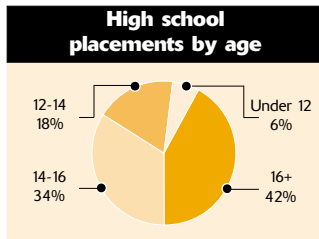
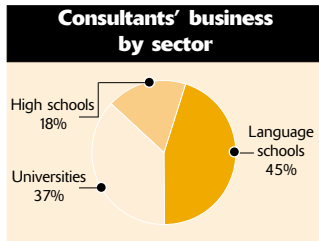
81 per cent of high school and university students required a language course before their education course

48 per cent of our respondents' clients changed their mind about their study location or institution after consultation

rather than postgraduate studies.

The high school sector was more buoyant than its university counterpart, with only 20 per cent of respondents reporting a decrease in bookings. The remaining consultants reported that numbers had remained stable or increased by between 20 and 30 per cent in the 12 months to September 2001.

For high school students, too, the reputation of the education institution was one of the most important considerations, followed by safety, quality of teaching and cost. One



consultant reported that high school bookings were increasing due to the pressure put on students in Taiwanese schools to perform well academically. Other reasons given for the increase include the promotion of study abroad through a scholarship contest and increased promotion on the web. Eighty-nine per cent of our consultants' high school students who went on to university stayed in the same country as where they went to high school and, of these, 58 per cent arranged their university places through the

same consultancy they had used for their high school placements.

Taiwanese consultants reported that commission rates for university placements ranged from 10 to 20 per cent, averaging out at 12.5 per cent, while high school rates ranged from 10 to 15 per cent, averaging out at 12 per cent. In both sectors the commission was usually paid on the first year's fees only, although one consultant reported being paid commission on the second year's

fees too. On average, only 18 per cent of their clients knew which university or school they wanted to study in prior to consultation with an education consultant, while 20 per cent knew which city or town they wanted to study in and 58 per cent had already decided on their preferred country. Of all the students who had some ideas about where they wanted to study, 48 per cent changed their minds after their consultation with an agent.

Participating consultancies:

Chinese Education Development and Cooperation Association (CEDCA), Education Foundation of Europe, Fastlane International Corp, Internal Student Federation, Jean and Mildred's Consulting Services, Jingham International Education Consulting Institute, Lai-yin Educational Advisory Services, Sino American Education Services Centre, Taida International Education Services, UKEAS

Most frequently mentioned programmes:

High Schools

In Australia: St Aloysius College, Adelaide, SA; St Joseph's Nudgee College, Virginia, QLD. *In Canada:* Columbia International College, Hamilton, ON. *In the UK:* Bellerbys College, Hove; Concord College, Shrewsbury; Kent College, Canterbury; Monkton Combe School, Bath; St Felix School, Suffolk. *In the USA:* Antelope Valley Christian School, Lancaster, CA; Cambridge School of Weston, Weston, MA; Happy Valley School, Ojai, CA; Monte Vista Christian School, Watsonville, CA; Ojai Valley School, Ojai, CA; St Anthony High School, St Anthony, TX.

Universities

In Australia: Bond University, Gold Coast, QLD; Griffith University, Brisbane, QLD; University of South Australia, Adelaide, SA. *In the UK:* Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham; Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds; New College Nottingham, Nottingham; University of North London, London. *In the USA:* Dominican University of California, San Rafael, CA; Indiana University-Purdue University Indiana, Indianapolis, IN; La Sierra University, Riverside, CA; Murray State University, Murray, KY.