

## destination analysis

## Australian outlook

International student numbers at Australian universities were up in 2004, although financial considerations and options elsewhere could affect figures in the future.

The fastest growing markets for us are China and India," says Nick Shaw from the University of Tasmania in Launceston, TAS. "We anticipate that in the next three years both these countries will overtake Malaysia as major providers of students."

Shaw's experiences are common at many of Australia's 39 universities, which, according to statistics from IDP Education Australia, collectively saw Chinese and Indian student numbers increase by 43 per cent and 53 per cent respectively between the second semester of 2003 and the same semester in 2004. Overall, international student numbers at Australian universities grew by 11 per cent in this period and India overtook Malaysia for the first time to become the second most important student provider country behind China.

However, while the picture for Australian universities appears to look rosy, many industry insiders are making less optimistic predictions about future market growth, and financial considerations are contributing to this caution. Shaw notes that strong growth in the previous three years has already slowed this year and says, "By far the biggest impact on international student enrolments is the growing strength of the Australian dollar against the US dollar. We estimate that it is now 80 per cent more expensive for a Malaysian student to study in Australia than it was three years ago."

Tracy McCabe at the University of Newcastle in NSW agrees that currency fluctuations have had a negative effect on international enrolment. "There does seem to be some softening in some of our more

traditional markets in Southeast Asia," she says. "Currency, more options for study at home [and] greater choice of study in other countries like Singapore and Malaysia [has had an effect on our international numbers]."

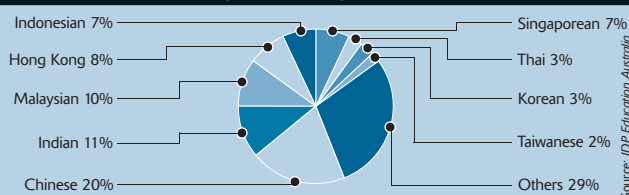
A trend towards increased foreign study options in many Asian students' home countries, either through the emergence of off-shore campuses or through partnership programmes with local education providers, has clearly taken its toll on international enrolments in Australia. According to the IDP statistics, the number of Singaporean and Indonesian students at Australian universities decreased by 10 per cent and seven per cent respectively last year, while Malaysia and Thailand saw student numbers stagnating with zero per cent growth.

Peter Day from the University of Wollongong in NSW points out that increased competition from study destinations further afield has not helped matters. "European universities are emerging as competitors, eyeing Asia as a fertile recruitment ground for full-fee paying students," he asserts.

Universities are endeavouring to ensure that they continue to attract international students. The Internet, in particular, is starting to play a greater role for some. "We are developing our international website to meet the needs of the client wanting to enrol independently," says Shaw.

McCabe, too, sees the Internet as a medium that has not yet been fully exploited. "We are exploring more Internet-based promotion and support for students," she says, adding, "We are also working more closely with partners in key markets."

### Percentage of international students in Australian universities by nationality, Semester 2, 2004



## subject focus

## Catering courses

Below is a selection of institutions offering catering courses around the world.

Location	Name of institution	Types of courses	No. of strat dates p/year	Max. no. stud. in class	No. students in dept.
<b>Australia</b>					
Adelaide, SA	Tafe South Australia	c	7	25	-
Brisbane, QLD	Institute of Tafe, Mt Gravatt campus	c	3	14	90
Melbourne, VIC	Northern Melbourne Institute of Tafe	c,sh,u	2	20	-
Sydney, NSW	Tafe NSW - Sydney Institute	c	2	15	500
<b>Canada</b>					
Kamloops, BC	Thompson Rivers University	c	4	40	-
Vancouver, BC	Art Institute of Vancouver	c,p,sh,u	4	22	350
Vancouver, BC	Pacific Institute of Culinary Arts	c	4	12	75
Vancouver, BC	Vancouver Community College	c	20	20	-
Vancouver, BC	Vancouver Premier College	sh	3	16	-
<b>New Zealand</b>					
Auckland	Manukau Institute of Technology	c,sh,u	2	20	400
Tauranga	Bay of Plenty Polytechnic	c,p,sh	5+	v	-
<b>UK</b>					
Bournemouth	Bournemouth and Poole College	c,sh,u	-	15	-
Guildford	Guildford College	c,sh	-	20	-
Somerset	Rosie Davies Courses for Cooks	sh	7	5	5
<b>USA</b>					
Austin, TX	Culinary Academy of Austin	sh	4	12	50
Chicago, IL	Kendall College	c,sh,u	4	20	700
Manhattan, KS	American Institute of Baking	c,p,sh,u	100+	100	200

c continuing education sh short courses p post graduate u undergraduate - information not supplied