

TRIBAL

i-graduate

## The global student experience

2022 insights and analysis from the world's largest student survey

### INCLUDES

Feature articles:

- *International Student Happiness and Wellbeing*
- *Employability and Labour Mobility*
- *Value for Money*
- *Transnational Education*

### PLUS

Regional Focus reports for UK, Europe, Asia, North America, Australia and New Zealand



ESTABLISHED IN 2005



IN OVER 1600 INSTITUTIONS



ACROSS 40 COUNTRIES



FEEDBACK FROM OVER 4 MILLION STUDENTS





## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

# Foreword

Tribal i-graduate has been supporting Higher Education institutions around the world since 2005, tracking and benchmarking student and stakeholder opinion across the entire student journey. Our 2021 whitepaper shone a light on the significant impact of the pandemic on the global student experience and how the shift to online/hybrid delivery methods had been received by student populations around the world.

Now, 12 months on, our 2022 report looks at how Higher Education has responded to the quickly evolving landscape, the areas where institutions are seeing early turnarounds to pre-pandemic levels of student satisfaction, and the areas where the legacy of the pandemic continues to impact student satisfaction.

I would like to extend our thanks to all the institutions globally that have shown their determination to capture and respond to the fluctuating student voice during this time. Through the insight and analysis we provide via the Student Barometer, we are proud to support our client institutions' endeavours to provide the best possible experience for current and future students.

We are already preparing for the next edition of the Student Barometer in late 2022, and looking forward to the results showing a continued strong recovery in student satisfaction. We hope as many institutions as possible will take the opportunity to be part of the biggest global student survey since before the pandemic!



**Nick Pidgeon,**  
**Head of Surveys & Benchmarking,**  
**Tribal i-graduate**



*"I believe by benchmarking our performance with global HE and making data-driven decisions, we will see gains, not only in the ROI, but in student success and experience."*

**PROF. DR YONG ZULINA BINTI ZUBAIRI, ASSOCIATE VICE-CHANCELLOR (GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT), UNIVERSITI MALAYA (MALAYSIA)**

## GLOBAL ANALYSIS for a global sector

The analysis presented within the following articles and reports has been drawn from i-graduate's International Student Barometer, established in 2005 and used by over 1600 institutions across 40 countries comprising feedback from over 4 million students. The latest dataset benefits from responses from 98,200 students studying in 12 countries.

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

# Student Employability and Labour Mobility: The benefits of addressing employability



**Nannette Ripmeester,**  
**Director i-graduate Europe and**  
**North America**

Based on the latest International Student Barometer (ISB) 2021 data\*, we have to conclude employability remains key for students. Whether it is in relation to deciding where to study, whether it signifies good value for money, or whether it is with regards to recommending an institution to prospective students, the student focus is on employability. Hence this is an important area for Higher Education institutions to get right.

## The link between employability and study decision

Globally, 96% of students say their study decision-making<sup>1</sup> is driven by Future Career Impact. This makes *Future Career Impact* the key element driving study decisions for international students across the globe for the fourth year in a row, since the ISB of 2018, confirming it as a key area for the marketing and recruitment of any Higher Education institution. Over time, we have seen another employability-related element, the importance of *Earning Potential*, increase from 90% to 93% in the past four years. To compare, *Institution Reputation* has lingered for those four years at around 94% and *Research Quality* has moved from 91% in 2018 to 93% in 2021, just ahead of *Earning Potential* by 0.7% (see graph 1).

\* ISB dataset used N=92,591

<sup>1</sup> ISB question: "How important were the following factors when deciding where to study?" (only asked to first-year students or those doing short courses; N= 47,291)



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

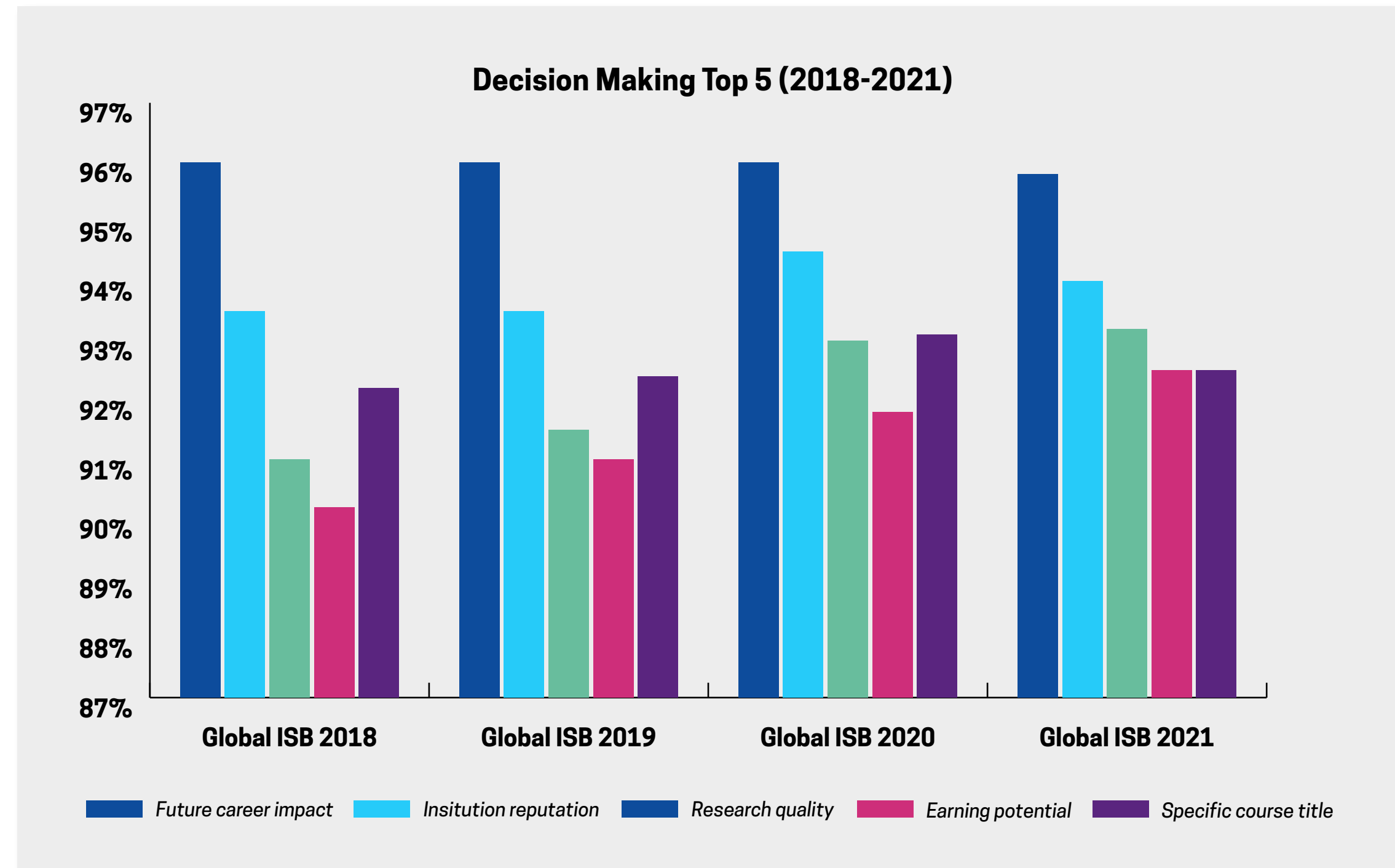
Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE



Graph 1

Diving deeper into the data, we see there is very little difference between the various levels of study; Bachelor, Master and VET levels all being most likely to consider the impact of the qualification on their future career as the most important factor (96%), with Post Graduate Research (PGR) students equally likely to see *Future Career Impact* and *Research Quality* as important in making their study choice (both 96%). For both Foundation course and non-degree level students *Future Career Impact* is the most important (95%), whilst *Personal Safety and Security* (both at 94%), *Tuition Fees* (both at 91%), and *location* (at 88% respectively 90%) play an important role for these groups too.

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

# Acknowledging the impact of student nationality

When we look at the differences between the top student nationalities represented in the ISB, the following stands out: Indonesian and Malaysian students are the most likely to find impact of *my qualification on my future career* as important (98%), followed by Indian, Vietnamese and Nepalese students (97%) and next Pakistani (96%), US, Chinese and Nigerian students (all 95%). When your Higher Education institution caters for a large group of any of the above nationalities, the need at your institution to ensure that students feel well prepared for their future career goals is evident. (Please note their future career goal may take place back in their home country!). However, if we look at the global dataset of this current ISB wave the conclusion is that many institutions have some work to do in the employability area as only 66% of final year students feel well prepared for their future career, just one semester before their graduation. In general, Higher Education institutions in North America and the Southern Hemisphere, score better than most continental European institutions in preparing their students for the world of work that awaits them. Continental Europe may be lagging here due to the historical perspective that seems less focused on graduate outcomes than elsewhere. But *Institution Reputation and Future Career Impact* should go hand-in-hand. The institution that manages to combine dedication for learning with preparation for the future world of work, is the institution that is able to attract the 'sustainable generation'. This generation is highly aware of scarcity in their entire thinking and convinced they have got just one shot at getting it right. And the right career path seems one of these choices they have to get right.

## The link between employability and whether an education is considered good value for money

When looking into the data around the ISB Value for Money question<sup>2</sup>, employability also scores a number one in importance, above any element that deals with learning or learning support. When looking at the global top 10 regarding which factors are considered of importance when rating Value for Money, international students foremost mention how well the institution has prepared them for their future career goals, followed in 7th place by learning that will help me to get a good job. Particularly for Indian first-year students the impact of my qualification on my future career is the key decision-making factor with a high impact correlation to Value for Money.

<sup>2</sup> ISB question: "To what extent do you feel that your current course is good Value for Money?"



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

# The link between employability and recommendation

To determine how important a certain area is for recommendation of the study experience, we calculate the correlation between the satisfaction of that element and students' propensity to recommend based on the ISB question: "Would I recommend this institution to others thinking of studying here?". The element in the global 2021 ISB dataset with the highest correlation to recommendation is *Course Organisation* with 41%. Needless to say, this is an important area to get right. Last year, the element was also in the top 10, but ranked 8th place – the importance of the organisation and smooth running of the course/programme has increased during the second year of the pandemic, when many institutions were moving back from online learning to partial physical learning.

Second-most important for recommending the study experience is *Employability*<sup>3</sup>, with *Careers Advice*<sup>4</sup> from *academic staff* also featuring in the in the top 5. (See graph 2) This clearly signals the overriding importance of getting the area around career guidance and support right; understanding it is more than 'just' a careers advice workshop in the last semester is key to this, and institutions should be integrating employability into the DNA of the entire learning experience.

However, the satisfaction with *Careers Advice* is the second lowest scoring global element of all learning questions (at 75%). The lowest score is for *Opportunities for Work Experience*<sup>5</sup> (at 73%), although over time, both elements have increased considerably, from 71% and 68% respectively in 2017. 'Learning that will help me get a good job' scores 81%, 28th place out of 31 learning elements. It is most important for Nigerian, Chinese, Malaysian and Nepalese students. Chinese students find by far *Careers Advice* and *Opportunities for Work Experience* most important of the top nationalities surveyed, although it is interesting to note Chinese students may not be the most active in seeking careers support. So, it is critical for Higher Education institutions to think about their career guidance funnel (see image below) and how to deliver career guidance to a large and diverse student audience<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> ISB question: "Learning that will help me get a good job."

<sup>4</sup> ISB question: "Advice and guidance on long-term job opportunities and careers from academic staff/faculty members."

<sup>5</sup> ISB question: "Opportunities for work experience/ work placements as a part of my studies."

<sup>6</sup> 'Global Employability: Common Challenges in Preparing Students for a Global World of Work', Sevi Christoforou and Nannette Ripmeester, CAPA Career Integration: Reviewing the Impact (pp 98-101), <https://www.labourmobility.com/capa-career-integration-vol-3/>

Learning elements	Derived Importance
Course organisation	41%
Employability	38%
The quality of classes	37%
Good teachers	36%
Careers advice from academic staff	36%

Graph 2

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

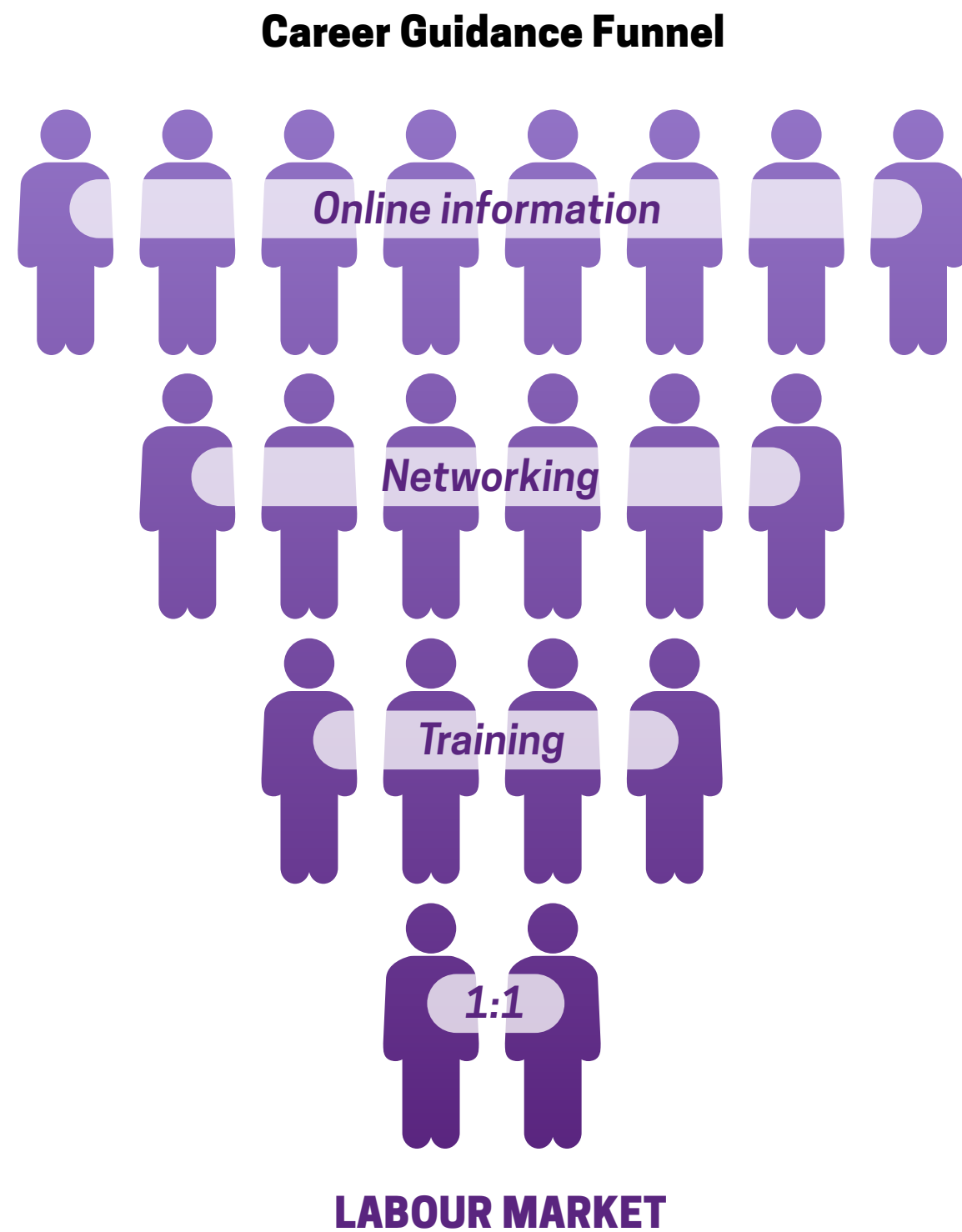
Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

### Relevant and accessible careers advice services

Despite the importance of employability for recommendation, value for money and study decision, the use of institutions' careers advisory services tends to be low. ISB data shows that globally only 19% of international students have used the Careers Service, whereas 23% of students surveyed said "it may be useful, but I do not know how to access the service". Maybe the career service offering needs a rethink and should be closer to what students hope to gain from it? As a bare minimum international students should know the service exists and caters for their needs too. My advice to Higher Education institutions is that those who truly accommodate integration of employability understanding into learning curricula, will most likely be the winners in attracting future talent to their institutions.



*"For our international students employability is important. We believe that international students have great skills and can make a great contribution to the US workforce. We're doing well, as 78% of our final year international students say they are well prepared for their future career goals, but we're always trying to improve our services and make employability more pivotal in our learning offering as that is what our students expect from us."*

**BRENDAN O'BRIEN, DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS OFFICE, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

# The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

I've been involved in transnational education (TNE) for the last 15 years both as a strategic advisor at the British Council leading a project to capture the scale of UK TNE in its early days when no one really knew the extent of student or programme numbers, to now as Regional Director, Asia for Tribal i-graduate running our signature Student Barometer across the region's institutions including multiple TNE operations from both UK and Australia.

Living in Malaysia, I have been fortunate in witnessing the laboratory of TNE that the private sector here created and a dizzying array of models from pathways to dual/double degrees, to 2+1 (two years in Malaysia, one year in UK or Australia) becoming 4 + 0 (all three or four years in the host country - to the fully fledged stand-alone or branch campus).

Australian institutions have been at the forefront of campus development, and it has been a pleasure to work with a number of them. Currently in Malaysia, for example, there are three full scale Australian campuses – Monash, Swinburne and Curtin all well-established with significant student numbers. (4,000+)

Curtin kindly agreed to help us put together a case study of their TNE operations and I was privileged to interview some key strategic leaders in Perth, Singapore and Malaysia. In Perth I spoke with Barbara Lung who is Director Global Curtin, in Singapore with Professor Linley Lord who is their PVC and President of Curtin Singapore, and in Malaysia with Professor Beena Giridharan, Dean of Teaching and Learning.

In terms of campus operations, Curtin is one of the more ambitious Australian institutions and has recently opened campuses in Dubai (2017) and Mauritius (2018). I asked Barbara Lung what motivated their confidence in opening new campuses when others are perhaps more cautious.

*"I think it's because it's been a long-standing part of our DNA, and there's never been a question whether we should or shouldn't."*



Guy Perring,  
Director, i-graduate - Asia



## CONTENTS

### Foreword

#### Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

#### The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

#### Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

#### International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

#### Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

#### Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

#### Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

#### Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

#### Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

#### Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Prof. Linley added that *“Curtin was one of the first universities to take education offshore, take business offshore, business education offshore. And we built the Miri campus 20 plus years ago, with support from the government in Sarawak. And so, I think it was that thing of once you’ve done one, it wasn’t as scary to then look at another.”*

The older TNE campuses are in Malaysia and Singapore; Curtin Malaysia was established in 1999 with, rather uniquely, the Sarawak state government as its partner. The background to the Malaysian campus gives some insight into the mutually-beneficial relations between Australia and Malaysia over the last 50 years. The Columbo Plan (a long-term scholarship programme) educated a large number of Sarawakians in Australia, many of whom ended up in the Sarawakian government and wished others to experience the education they received in Perth.

Similarly, Curtin has been in Singapore for over 30 years and has had a dedicated campus for the last 13 years.

*“In the Singapore context, the campus was already established. We had worked with a couple of different partners, and then it was about creating a more stable relationship, and defining how contractually we would work together. That then became the model for taking it to the other campuses. And we worked out it was better to have Curtin’s name ‘on the shingle’ and work with the partner to meet Curtin’s objectives - we want students to say they got their degree from Curtin.”* - Prof. Linley Lord, PVC and President Curtin Singapore



*“There has also been a tradition of a lot of families sending their children to Australia, particularly to Perth, to complete their schooling. That continues even now with many children going to Australia and New Zealand for high school, especially among the Chinese communities.”*

**PROF. BEENA GIRIDHARAN, DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**



## CONTENTS

### Foreword

### Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

### Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

### International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

### Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

### Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

### Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

### Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Expanding the TNE footprint

As is often the case with TNE partnerships globally, they start with UG programmes with a teaching only focus, but as they grow, become more established and feel part of the host country's education system; they begin to look at research and are able to tap into local funds and opportunities. Both Curtin Singapore and Curtin Malaysia have already begun to move into these new areas.

The challenge for all TNE institutions is to maintain the identity of the institution whilst reflecting and adapting to the host country. That tension between the local and the global is ever-present and arguably should be. Barbara Lung, Director Global, explains how their One Curtin approach seeks to change the rhetoric on this front.

*“Universities around the world very often use the initial campus as the ‘mothership’, and then use the other campuses as ‘feeder campuses’. We, however, have worked very hard on moving that rhetoric away from ‘internationalization’ to ‘globalization’, and giving campuses their own rhetoric.”*

This “One Curtin” approach translates into a sense of a global university rather than an Australian university with a few global outposts. In practice, this gives rise to both formal and informal ways that the campuses work together. The four PVCs meet on a weekly basis to share what is happening across the university, and together seek ways to address any particular issues they are dealing with.

*“So, the idea of One Curtin is reflective of a real sense of collaboration at the top levels of management, and this percolates down to the staff and students,”* comments Professor Linley Lord.

Their participation in the Barometer across their campuses in Perth, Miri and Singapore allows them to quantify and better understand issues within the student population with the ability to interrogate the data by faculty, study level and country of origin, as well as using the open comments for deeper context; each campus is able to scrutinise issues and pinpoint areas for investigation and intervention, but in a way that is appropriate for their local context.



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Leveraging the time zone benefit

Unlike the majority of TNE operations, where large time differences can present an obstacle to effective collaboration, Singapore, Malaysia and Perth are all in the same time zone so there is the opportunity to conduct synchronous classes. This has really enhanced Curtin's capacity to connect students and foster a true global community that goes beyond the lip-service often paid to being 'global' – Curtin truly back this up on a day-to-day basis.

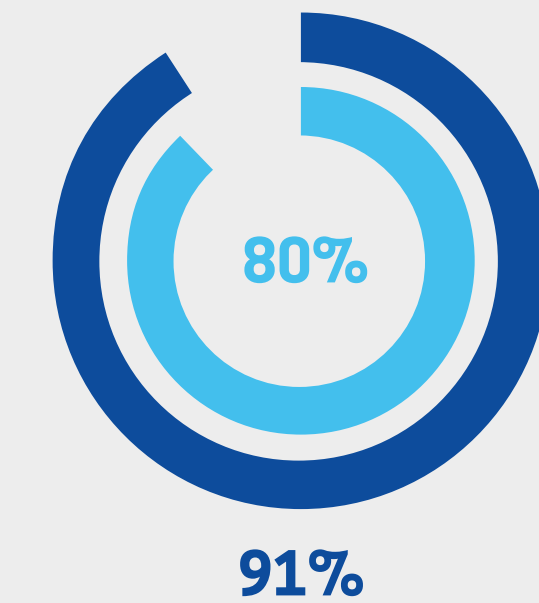
## Distributed Learning Facilities

Distributed learning refers to a multi-media method of instruction delivery which can include web-based instruction, streaming video, video conferencing etc. This had been developed by Curtin before COVID and allowed them to share content across campuses in Perth and Miri, Sarawak. It utilises Echo360 so staff can walk around the classroom, and by having the same facilities on multiple campuses, they are able to have joint facilitation, in real-time. For example, the first half of the lecture for students in Perth and in Miri can be conducted by a staff member in Miri, the second half by someone in Perth. This occurs for every single lecture time or tutorial time through the entire semester, driving up engagement through quality learning environments, and increasing student opportunities for collaboration and relationship building on a global scale. As the technology and platforms (and in some countries, the infrastructure) improve, Curtin is keen to roll-out this successful One Curtin practice across further courses and campuses.

## Exceptional Online Learning

The data from the Barometer in 2021 for Curtin Singapore revealed an institution where 91% of their international students were either satisfied or very satisfied with their online experience. This compares with 80% across Asia. Whilst in Curtin Malaysia 90% were satisfied with online lectures and tutorials compared to 89% more broadly across Asia.

## Satisfaction with the online experience



Asia  
Curtin Singapore



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Using the Barometer

Curtin have been long-standing partners of Tribal i-graduate, with their participation in the Student Barometer playing a key role in listening to the student voice as the university evolves its provision. Barbara Lung highlights why the student voice is so important to capture and how the Barometer has helped them identify and understand the areas that are important to international students.

*“I think it’s incredibly important to understand where students are at and how they rate you, especially when it comes to outlier years like the pandemic years. I don’t necessarily believe that we’re going to go back to what it was; I think the pandemic has absolutely highlighted some of our weaknesses and some of our strengths, and I think it is so important to address how the pandemic has impacted students and the student experience. It’s really, really important for us to make sure that students are supported throughout their experience here.”*

A critical element of the Student Barometer is the comparison of an institution’s student experience against other institutions, nationally or internationally. For TNE providers, there is the added attraction of being able to compare campuses. For Prof. Linley Lord, the ability to benchmark is crucial. *“We don’t just say, “Yes, that looks pretty good” because, actually, it might not look good when we compare ourselves with others. We need to find out how and what other institutions are doing, and what would make sense for us to do in our context. So that for me is the absolute value of the Student Barometer.”*



*“With the barometer, I think it gives us an opportunity to understand more in terms of the wider perspective of why students choose to come to Curtin Malaysia; what is their experience of the ecosystem of support such as accommodation, transportation, the campus experience for example. It gives us an opportunity to understand some of the finer details of what students experience, and what are some of the challenges. And I think most importantly, we are able to benchmark our presence against other private providers in Malaysia.”*

**PROF. BEENA GIRIDHARAN, DEAN OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## A vibrant Campus

Having personally visited all three campuses on a regular basis over the last six years, it is rewarding to see how Tribal i-graduate data is used to enhance the student experience. Just to highlight some of the individual results in the Barometer for 2021, it is very noticeable how Curtin Perth has created a very vibrant campus, and this is reflected in high scores in the areas of social interaction/activities across the Barometer indices.

Below you can see some comparisons comparing Curtin scores with the global index and also its chosen bespoke benchmark group, The Australian Technology Network (ATN), which is a grouping of innovative and enterprising universities including Deakin, RMIT, South Australia and University of Technology Sydney.

	GLOBAL	ATN	CURTIN
<b>Making friends from other countries</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>86%</b>
<b>Social Activities</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Making friends with local students</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>71%</b>
<b>Student Guild</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>96%</b>



## CONTENTS

### Foreword

#### Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

#### The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

#### Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

#### International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

#### Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

#### Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

#### Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

#### Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

#### Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

#### Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Making friends from other countries and with the host students is a good proxy for integration and you can see high scores across the board for this. Barbara commented on the vibrancy of the campus and the important role of the Student Guild (equivalent to Student Union or Council). Again, it is clear the Guild has a key role in creating the atmosphere on campus with 78% of international students aware of its role and this element achieving a 96% satisfaction rate.

Barbara attributes the vibrant community, in part, to the diversity of their student population and the fact that the ratio of international to domestic students feels right. 10-15% of the student body are international students, which is a lot less than some other universities. And they have ensured recruitment from a wide range of countries, which again adds to the vibrancy and the inclusivity on campus. *“The Curtin Volunteer Program is incredibly successful in making sure that international students in particular, but also domestic students, are integrated and are volunteering somewhere.”*

## The Future

There are plans in the future for more Curtin campuses globally although Barbara, Linley and Beena were naturally tight-lipped about where they might next venture. Singapore itself is moving to a new campus with plans to grow its range of delivery, explains Prof. Linley, “We’re now moving into what we’re calling Curtin 2.0, which is really the next stage of our development. So, moving from what was a teaching-only focus into a comprehensive global campus of Curtin - engaging in research, offering PhD programs, as well as undergraduate, postgraduate programs. And expanding the range of programs that we’re offering”.

Prof. Linley also sees it important that Curtin reacts to regional demands and consequently the campus will look at IT, data science and cyber security fields where job vacancies are growing across ASEAN. Curtin sees its role as providing career opportunities for its students both within Singapore and across the region.

With a strong TNE model, forward-thinking leaders, and a commitment to capturing and responding to the student voice in the region, the future certainly looks very promising for Curtin and its global students; and we are delighted to have been a small part of its growing global influence.



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

# Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?



**Josie Ruddick,**  
**Senior Client Support Officer**

Value for money has always been an important factor for fee-paying Higher Education students internationally. As consumers, the student experience, and opinions on whether the student experience has been good value for money is vital for universities to increase student recruitment and improve their reputation through word of mouth. More recently, global lockdowns, travel restrictions for international students and a decrease in face-to-face teaching that has led to an emergence of hybrid delivery across many institutions, has led to increasing demand for better value for money. As we return to a “new normal”, it is more important than ever that we understand how students’ perceptions of value for money have changed, and incorporate this data into increasing the value students receive in Higher Education through tangible action points.

Value for money is an expansive topic and subjective to each student, depending on circumstances. The International Student Barometer (ISB) provides a way in which to understand student opinion around value for money and its contributing factors. The survey asks questions under themes of living, learning and support and gives the opportunity for students to provide open comments, providing a holistic picture of their satisfaction with their institution experience. Using the data within the latest “Global ISB” benchmark\*, which includes nearly 100,000 student responses from 2020 and 2021, we can gain an understanding of whether students think their course is good value for money and what other themes this correlates to, to give a comprehensive picture of whether students perceive their institution experience as value for money.

\* Equivalent statement to “\*Responses collected from 51,130 international students studying in 12 countries (September to December 2021)”



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

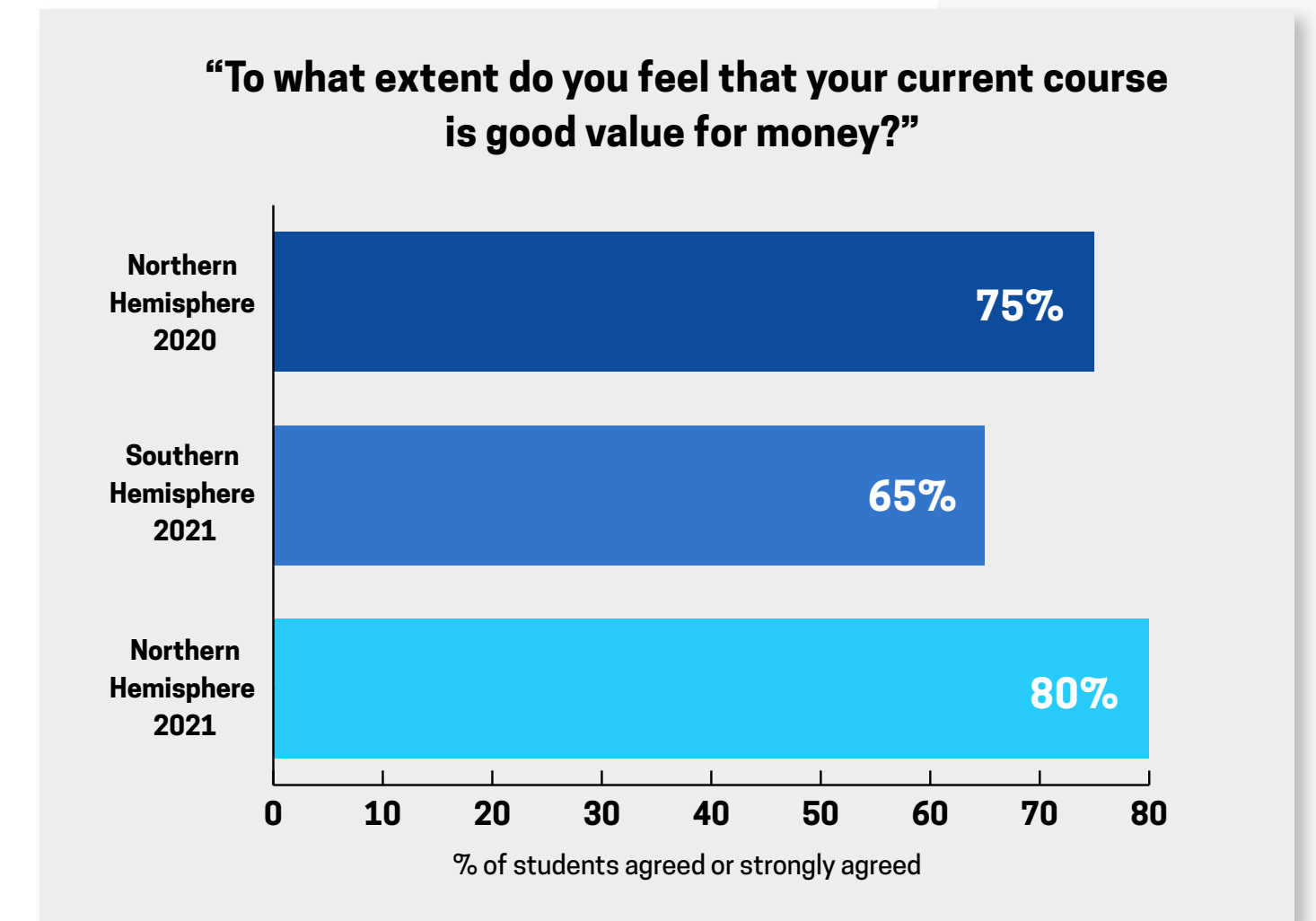
By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

### Are courses providing good value for money?

We asked students “*To what extent do you feel that your current course is good value for money?*”, to which 73% of undergraduate students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, while 77% of postgraduate taught students agreed or strongly agreed. This score varies across the multiple surveys that form the Global ISB benchmark. In the Northern Hemisphere 2020 survey, 75% of students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, in the Northern Hemisphere 2021 survey, this figure climbed to 80%, while in the Southern Hemisphere 2021 survey, only 65% of students agreed or strongly agreed. Contextual factors must play a part here, with lockdown restrictions varying across the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, and isolation rules and travel bans playing a part in how students live and learn, whether that’s from home or on campus.

We can get an idea of what other factors are contributing to the course value for money satisfaction score by applying correlation analysis; where a student scores highly on feeling that their course is good value for money, a strong correlation with other survey questions shows us that they are also scoring highly on those too. While this gives us a strong indication of what factors may contribute to value for money for the course, we can also explore each theme further, using data from other satisfaction questions asked, to gain an understanding of how students feel about their institution experience being value for money.





## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

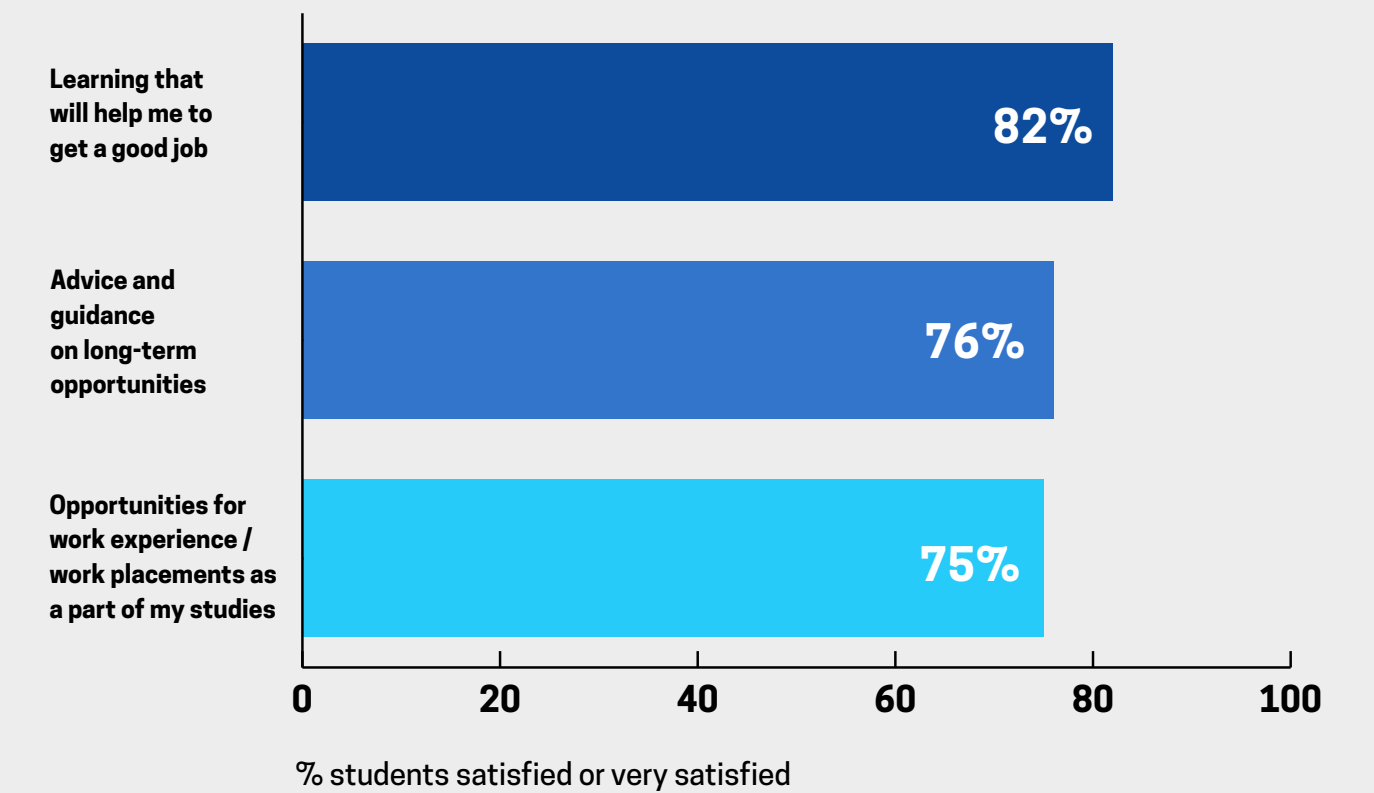
### Careers

The question that had the strongest correlation to course value for money was “How well has your experience at this institution prepared you for your career goals?” for all cohorts that were asked this question (first years excluded), illustrating how much students value career preparation. Looking into this further, only 64% of students felt that their institution had prepared them well or very well for their career goals. This low score highlights an area where universities’ efforts and initiatives certainly have scope for improvements, and where they can be confident that those improvements would impact their students’ perceptions of good value for money. Other strong correlating questions were “learning that will help me to get a good job”, “advice and guidance on long-term opportunities and careers from academic staff” and “opportunities for work experience / work placements as a part of my studies”. A strong correlation between feeling that your course is good value for money and being satisfied with the way in which the institution is preparing you for employment, is perhaps expected. 96% of students that were asked about the main decision factors in choosing their institution, felt that the impact of the qualification on their future career was either important or very important. This made it the top ranked decision factor ahead of institution reputation, specific course title, research quality and personal safety.

### Learning

Another strong correlating factor to course value for money, was learning experience. Across all study levels, students that felt their course was good value of money, also felt their learning experience was important. 86% of all students in the Global ISB were very satisfied or satisfied with their overall learning experience at their institution. This score is noticeably higher than course value for money scores, reaffirming that value for money encompasses multiple factors for students. Other strong correlating factors included “the quality of lectures”, “the organisation and smooth running of the course” and “the academic content of my course” with first years opting to score highly on questions relating to learning more than other study levels.

#### Satisfaction with careers-related elements showing high correlation with value for money





## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

Comments from students can provide more detail. Many students were unhappy with the lack of contact hours (both in-person and online), commenting that their fees did not correlate with the quality of education they were receiving. Many of the comments referred to 2 – 3 hours per week of contact time – some even less. Given the timing of the survey, this is perhaps not surprising. There has been widespread disruption to face-to-face teaching because of COVID-19 meaning a shift to online learning. Contact hours for humanities subjects have, however, always been low (Huff Post, 2017).

Comments also highlighted difficulties with the move to online learning in relation to groupwork and receiving recorded lectures without any interaction with lecturers. While the comments overwhelmingly showed a sense of heightened dissatisfaction in relation to the value for money students were receiving, it should be noted that some found the move online to be helpful for their living and learning context.

## Living

A student's living experience is also integral in their perception of value of money. Students that scored highly on course value for money, also scored highly on "Overall, how happy are you with your life at this institution at this stage in the year?" with 89% of all students in the Global ISB Benchmark choosing happy or very happy. Positively, 87% of students were satisfied or very satisfied with their overall living experience at the time of taking the survey.

Accommodation and cost of living standards are also key to the value students receive during their time at the institution. While 84% of students had access to suitable accommodation globally, 40% of students felt dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the cost of their accommodation. 28% of students globally cited "cost of living" as a reason to leave their country of studying.

Several students left comments expressing that their accommodation was poor value for money. One of the most important aspects of the student experience is living space and the physical environment. However, many students highlighted that this is not adequate versus the cost of their rent. Some students also felt that the cost of accommodation was having a negative impact on their mental health. COVID-19 also impacted students' living experience, with many noting that they found it difficult to meet people and felt that the institution wasn't doing enough about this, given that fees had not changed.

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

### Conclusion

We know from the data that students that agreed their course was value for money also scored highly across career questions, as well as living and learning experiences. This highlights that multiple factors encompass what is considered value for money by each student and illustrates the complexity of the subject.

Using both the data from the survey and drawing themes from the comments provided by students helps to paint a more detailed picture, both in the context of this article, and for participating individual institutions. Understanding comments in the context of COVID-19 is also important. Governments across the world had various rules which required compliance from institutions, with regards to face-to-face teaching and social activities, meaning scores and comments will have varied from pre-Pandemic results. The results do highlight that a focus on career preparation and the more time in lectures, seminars etc (in person & online), the better value for money for international students.

Moving forward, institutions could benefit from setting expectations prior to the arrival of international students, communicating information around online learning, contact hours and the cost of living, including the availability of accommodation. Improving student satisfaction is important as their opinions, perceptions of value for money, and propensity to recommend, are all integral for institution reputation and growth.



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

# International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality



**Kyla Steenhardt,**  
**Director, i-graduate - New Zealand**

There's no denying that social contact and interaction is key to international student happiness and wellbeing. This is evident in the fact that of the more than one hundred detailed student experience elements measured in the International Student Barometer (ISB), amongst those most likely to be correlated to international students' happiness are elements such as students making good contacts for the future, opportunities to experience the culture of their host country, social facilities and social activities.

With all of these social contact elements notably more difficult in COVID times, the significant fall in international students' happiness with their life at their institution between 2019 and 2020, as highlighted in i-graduate's [2021 Global student experience report](#), was hardly surprising.

Since the height of the COVID pandemic there has been a gradual return towards normality with international borders opening and in-person studies resuming. So, one year on, what does the 2021 ISB data tell us about international student happiness and wellbeing?

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

# Happiness

Positively, 2021 ISB data shows that 89% of international students globally were happy or very happy with their life at their institution, up from 83% in 2020. While this figure isn't yet at pre-COVID levels, it seems well on its way to being so.

Likely supporting this increase in happiness are notable increases in satisfaction since 2020 with social contact/interaction elements: satisfaction with social activities (organised events) up 13%, social facilities up 11%, making good contacts for the future up 8%, opportunities to experience the culture of their host country up 7%. And students' satisfaction has increased too with making friends from their host country, home country and other countries.

Of course, looking at a single global figure masks the considerable variation that exists within the international student population. There are notable differences in happiness levels by institution, with some better managing to support their students than others. There are also key differences at a broader level in terms of different groups of students. Looking at the largest nationality groups in the ISB sample, for example, shows that in 2021 Chinese and Nigerian students were most likely to be happy (90%), followed closely by students from India (89%), Germany and Malaysia (88%), with American students less likely (83%). American students were also notably less likely to be happy in previous years, suggesting cultural differences in relation to happiness, perhaps based on background and expectations.

One relatively new area in the ISB that is showing a clear relationship to international student happiness is students' experience of discriminatory behaviour at their institution. While it's unclear which is the driving factor, perhaps unsurprisingly, students who have never experienced discriminatory behaviour based on factors such as race or ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation and religious beliefs are notably more likely to be happy with life at their institution than those who have. Better understanding the nature and prevalence of discrimination experienced by their international students will help institutions reduce it, undoubtedly contributing to a more positive experience.



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

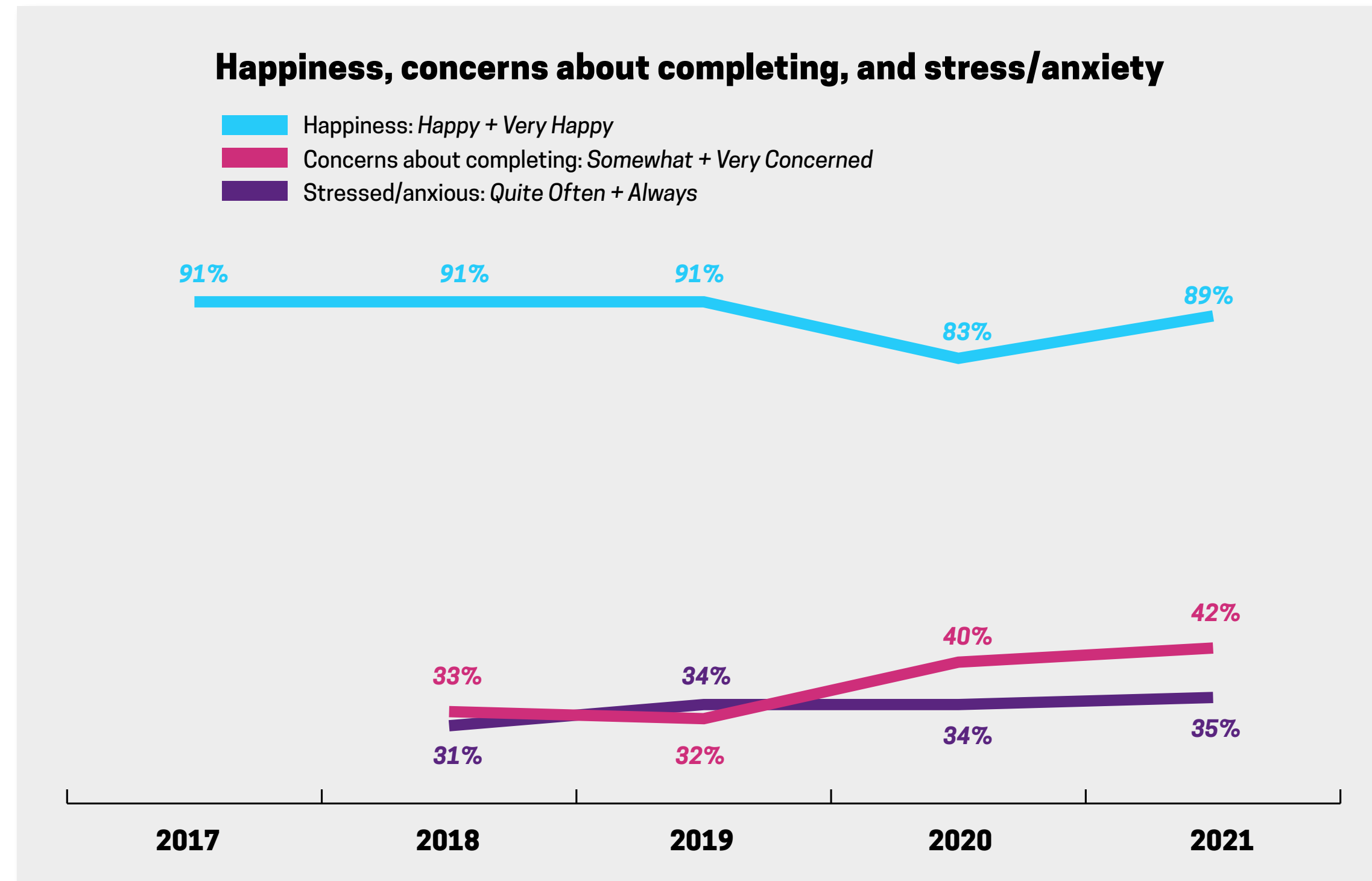
Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

# Student concerns about completing their studies

While international students' happiness with their life at their institution appears to be returning to pre-COVID levels, this is not the case for concern about completing their studies. When this question was introduced to the ISB in 2018, a third (33%) of international students globally indicated that they were concerned or very concerned. In 2020 this increased sharply to two-fifths (40%) and this has increased again slightly in 2021, up to 42%.



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

The move to online study undoubtedly contributed to this increased concern, with students whose studies had been moved (and remained) entirely online notably more likely to be concerned (49%) than those whose studies involved at least some in-person experience (38%). Not unexpectedly, concern was highest amongst international students living offshore due to border restrictions (58%), and lowest amongst those who had no experience of studies being moved online (33%).

Analysis of open comments in response to this question show a range of reasons for concerns, a number of which are related to financial factors, for example, family financial difficulties and, for students who are receiving a scholarship/funding, concerns over whether that will extend for another year or even cover online study.

With border restrictions continuing to be eased and an increasing move globally back towards more in-person study, there is cause to believe that levels of concern should again fall. Financial considerations, however, are likely to continue to be of concern to some students.

## Stress/anxiety

Perhaps surprisingly given the fall in happiness and increase in concern about completing their studies in 2020, international student stress/anxiety levels remained relatively constant with around a third (34%) of students reporting that they felt always or quite often stressed or anxious with their life at their institution in 2019 and 2020, increasing very slightly to 35% in 2021.

However, again results are variable by study status, with students whose studies remain entirely online more likely to be frequently stressed/anxious than those who have at least some studies face-to-face (40% v 33%). Again, it's offshore students who are suffering highest levels of stress/anxiety: 45% reporting that they are always or quite often stressed or anxious with their life at their institution.

There are notable differences too by international student nationality, with anxiety/stress levels highest amongst the top five ISB nationalities for American students (48%), and lowest amongst Nigerian students (23%). Again, differences are likely to be based on cultural backgrounds and norms, with stress/anxiety more likely to be acknowledged and expressed in some cultures.



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

And undergraduate students are more likely to be feeling stressed/anxious than their postgraduate taught and postgraduate research counterparts (41%, 32% and 28% respectively feeling always or quite often stressed or anxious). It's likely that this is related to life experience, with many undergraduate international students living overseas for the first time, usually without family, while postgraduate students are often more mature, more likely to have lived overseas previously and more often living with family.

### Student support

Along with the sudden need for institutions to move to online delivery of studies in 2020 was the need for online delivery of support services. As might be expected given the unprecedented nature of this and the speed at which it was required, satisfaction with support services overall globally fell from a stable 89% in 2017-2019 to 83% in 2020; which, all things considered, could have been worse. In 2021 this has recovered slightly, back up to 85%.

### Counselling services

Of particular relevance in relation to student wellbeing is counselling services.

In 2021, 16% of international students globally reported having used counselling services at their institution. Amongst students who had used counselling services, 89% were satisfied or very satisfied, satisfaction levels remaining steady over recent years, despite COVID.

Positively, there was very little difference in both usage of and satisfaction with counselling services between students who were studying entirely online (15%; 90%) and those studying face-to-face (16%; 89%). This seems to suggest that institutions are generally doing a good job of providing access to remote counselling services. Being able to access counselling remotely may also be more attractive to particular students as it allows for some degree of anonymity and may remove some of the stigma that some students may associate with needing to ask for assistance.

Of possible concern, however, is the one in five (22%) international students globally who felt that counselling services may be useful but didn't know how to access them. Ensuring that students are aware of how to get help if required should be a key focus for institutions.

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

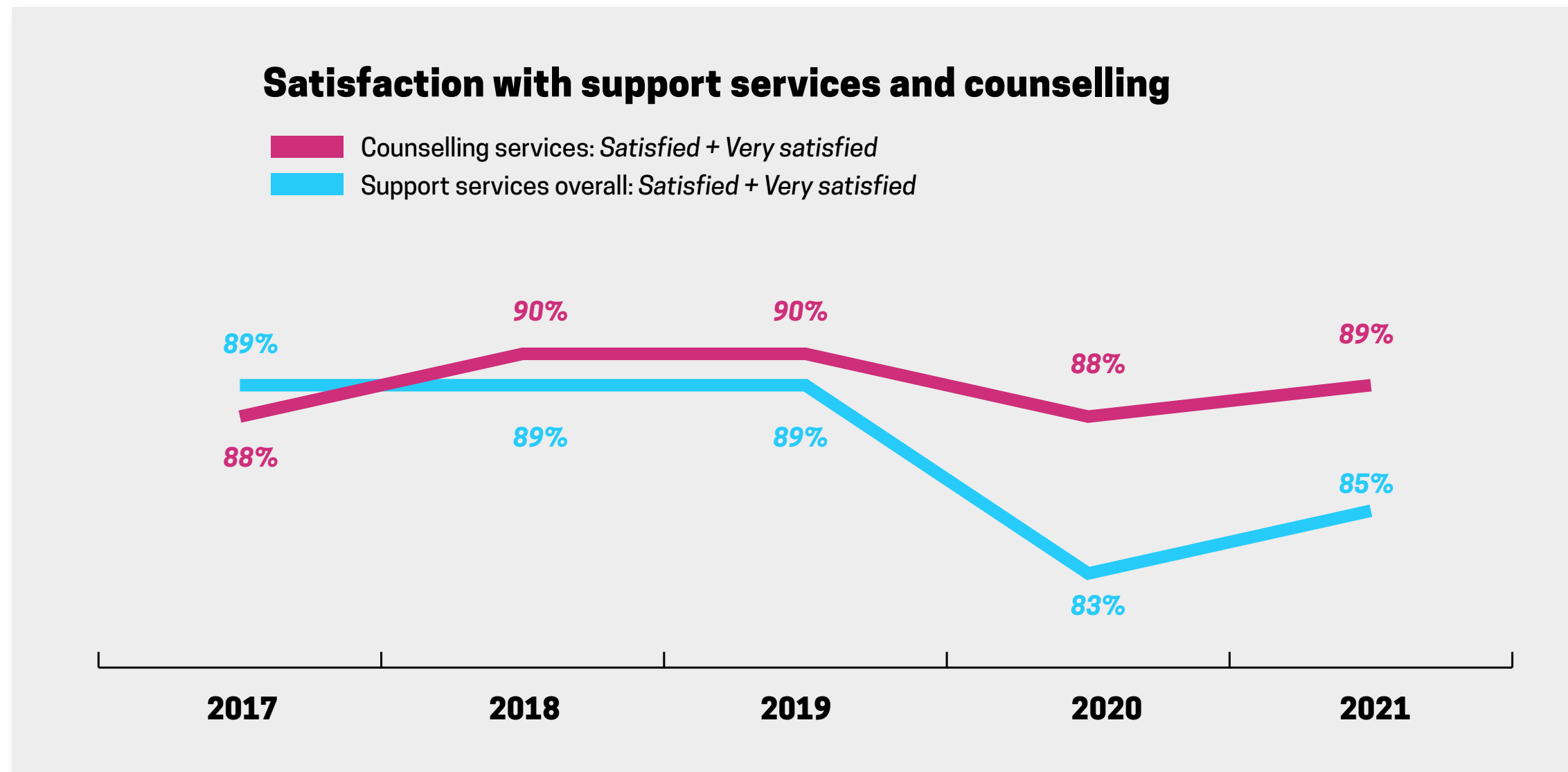
By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

It must also be kept in mind that these satisfaction scores are only based on students who have used counselling services at their institution; they don't take into account the experience of students who have been unable to access the services for some reason. And we do know from looking at students' open comments about support services that at a number of institutions counselling is becoming more difficult to access. This is certainly not to say that institutions aren't working hard to address this. For example, looking at Tribal's [Financial Benchmarking](#) data for UK higher education institutions shows that spend per student FTE on counselling/wellbeing services has more than tripled over the last six years. (Our whitepaper, "[Examining the extent of the student mental health crisis in HE](#)" provides further research into the step-change needed in UK universities' Student Support & Wellbeing services.)





## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## ARTICLE

# Conclusion

As a result of sustained efforts by institutions to provide the best possible support through difficult times alongside a gradual return to normality with international borders reopening, in-person studies resuming and social contact resuming, one year on, international student happiness and wellbeing does seem to be recovering from the impacts of COVID.

With happy, well-supported students being more likely to complete their studies and recommend their institution, institutions would do well to maintain the additional focus that COVID appears to have brought to the important topic of international student wellbeing. Considerable variation exists within the international student population as a whole, with particular groups of students notably less happy, more stressed/anxious and more likely to be concerned about completing their studies than others. Understanding these differences and the reasons behind them will allow institutions to tailor support accordingly and ensure that international student happiness and wellbeing doesn't just return to pre-COVID levels but exceeds them.

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

# REGIONAL FOCUS/ UK & Ireland

## International Student Barometer

2022 AT A GLANCE FINDINGS

### Overall Satisfaction

88%

Overall satisfaction in the UK

3% above global benchmark

82%

would recommend their institution

6% above global benchmark



18

UK Net Promoter Score is 18

Global benchmark = 7

81%

agree their current programme is good value for money

6% above global benchmark

Full at-a-glance findings



Mellissa Telka Oliver  
Senior Client Support Officer

The 2021 International Student Barometer data highlights that satisfaction amongst international students studying at UK institutions is high versus the global benchmark.

Across the UK, overall satisfaction has greatly improved; at 88%, this is up 11 percentage points from 2020, and three percentage points higher than the global average.



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## The challenges

There is still a large proportion of student comments reporting that online learning affected their academic performance, mental health, and general wellbeing. Although COVID satisfaction levels have improved since 2021 (which will be explored further in the next section), we are still seeing mental health impacts, and it is likely that we will continue to see these negative mental health impacts for a while.

Future career impact (95%), research quality (95%) and institution reputation (94%) form the top 3 of study decision factors for students studying at UK institutions. The same was found in 2020, 2019 and 2018; employability outcomes are still very important for students, and this is reflected on a global level too.

## The positives

For the second year in a row, we asked students “overall, how satisfied were you with this institution’s response to COVID-19”. 83% of students were satisfied with their institution’s response, which is one percentage point higher than the global average of 82%. This has increased eight percentage points since 2021, in which 72% of students were satisfied.

We can acknowledge that although these scores are favourable, we know there is a student mental health challenge in the UK, and therefore it will be critical for institutions to build upon these scores.

Satisfaction is high with regards to students’ learning experience; 90% of students were satisfied with their overall learning experience, compared to 86% globally. This is reflected when looking at career goals; 73% of UK students felt well prepared for their career goals versus 66% in the global benchmark.

Looking at online learning specifically, all elements are above the global benchmark. Some notable results include *online learning resources* and *library facilities* (94% UK vs 89% global); *online tests and exams* (92% UK vs 86% global); and *online tutorials* (91% UK vs 89% global).

A significant improvement is seen across the UK in value for money. Only 65% of students thought their course offered good value for money in 2020 (ten percentage points lower than the global comparison). This is up 16 percentage points at 81% in 2021, 6% above the global average.

## HIGHEST LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

(TOP 3)

97%

Library Service

96%

Personal Tutors

95%

Process of submitting work remotely

## LOWEST LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

(LOWEST 3)

68%

Careers - employment (securing a job for me)

66%

The cost of accommodation

63%

Financial support

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Closing thoughts and moving forwards...

Much of the data suggests UK institutions have fared well on the global landscape with the student experience being seen in a favourable light compared to global counterparts. This may be impacted by a faster return to campus life and face-to-face learning than other countries. This is not to undermine UK institutions' handling of the transition from COVID-impacted experience to campus return – efforts have clearly been well-considered and well implemented, giving rise to excellent bounce-back satisfaction scores, especially in the areas of value for money, Net Promoter Score and learning experience. It will therefore be interesting to see how UK institutions cope next year as other regions' institutions seek to play catch-up, but the UK's strong turnaround currently represents a significant advantage.



*“The ISB provides fantastic insight into our International Students regarding decision factors, expectations, concerns as well as tendency to recommend. The results not only allow us to measure our overall performance against benchmark institutions, but will allow us to make better informed decisions to enhance the overall international student experience at DMU.”*

**CHRIS MCCAFFERTY, INTERNATIONAL PLANNING MANAGER,  
DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY (UK)**

## LARGEST NEGATIVE VARIANCES AGAINST GLOBAL BENCHMARK

(TOP 3)

**-6%**

**Health centre**

**-2%**

**Disability support**

**-2%**

**Opportunities to Teach (PGR only)**

## LARGEST POSITIVE VARIANCES AGAINST GLOBAL BENCHMARK

(TOP 3)

**+11%**

**Living cost**

**+8%**

**The cost of accommodation**

**+7%**

**Careers - work placement**



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

# REGIONAL FOCUS/ Europe

## International Student Barometer

2022 AT A GLANCE FINDINGS

### Overall Satisfaction

84%

Overall satisfaction in Europe

1% below global benchmark

77%

would recommend their institution

1% above global benchmark



6

Europe Net Promoter Score

Global benchmark = 7

79%

agree their current programme is good value for money

4% above global benchmark

[Full at-a-glance findings](#)



Nannette Ripmeester  
Director i-graduate N. America and Europe

Looking at the European data for the International Student Barometer (ISB) 2021-22, the overall satisfaction is just 1% point lower than the global benchmark at 84% (19% very satisfied and 65% satisfied). However, the willingness of international students studying at European institutions to recommend their Higher Education institution (HEI) is 1% point above the global benchmark at 77%; within which we see a wide variety between participating institutions, from 66% to 84%. Does this mean HEIs in Europe do “better” than elsewhere? Perhaps, because when we look at value for money, 28% agree strongly that this course is good value for money which is 7% higher than the global benchmark of 21%.

## CONTENTS

### Foreword

### Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

### Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

### International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

### Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

### Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

### Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

### Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

When looking at the overall satisfaction levels for the main areas that the ISB focuses on we see that for the arrival, learning, living and support areas the European institutions lag behind the global benchmark. The arrival satisfaction scores 86%, which is 2% below the global benchmark. In Europe, the use of agents in the recruitment process is lower and we saw a higher return to face-to-face orientation, with 30% of the orientation being delivered in person against 18% globally. However, the slightly lower European satisfaction with the arrival process can probably be explained by the fact that most European institutions prefer a less 'spoon-feeding' approach to their welcome phase and require a little more independence from their international students than what is commonly seen in North America, for example.

Looking at the learning area, the 85% satisfaction rate is in line with the global benchmark. However, what is also noticeable, is that more students (6% above global benchmark) are not at all concerned about completing their study, and that is, given the struggles around the pandemic, a very hopeful sign. We also notice international students studying in Europe mention they are challenged more to analyse ideas or concepts in greater depth (40% answer "very often" against 34% globally). An area of learning that is of interest to employers is the ability to 'Use information, ideas, concepts from different topics to solve problems' which scores 3% higher, with students saying they were "very often" challenged in this respect. Also, the engagement with their studies scores higher, with 43% saying they "agree strongly" against 39% globally.

The living area scores 7% below the global benchmark, for a large part due to the high costs of living and issues around accommodation. From scarcity to cost and quality of accommodation, the housing situation is a serious issue for most European institutions. One could argue this is beyond the control of Higher Education institutions, but we have worked with a few HEIs in Europe to try and tackle the issue specifically using ISB data to make changes, and it is interesting to notice that an institution can make a difference here and increase satisfaction rates considerably by providing transparent information upfront, managing expectations and working with the city council in addressing the issue. European institutions, however, do much better than the global benchmark when it comes to making friends from other countries, feeling safe and secure on campus, and the entire campus environment.

## HIGHEST LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

(TOP 3)

96%

Feeling safe and secure on campus

95%

Expert lecturers

95%

Process of submitting work remotely

## LOWEST LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

(LOWEST 3)

44%

Financial support

42%

Finding accommodation

35%

The cost of accommodation



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

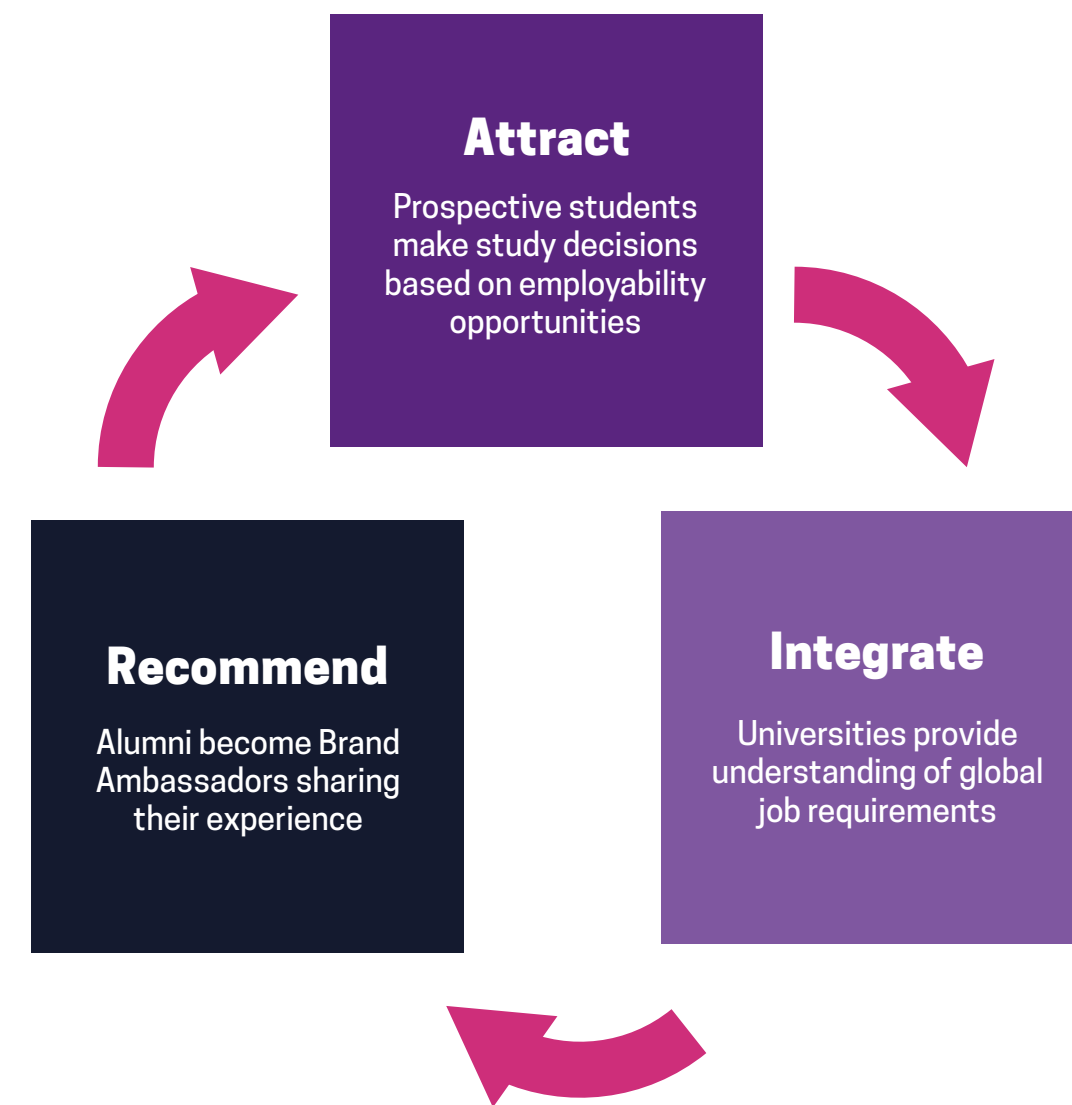
By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

The support area is probably the most worrying area if we compare European satisfaction (83%) against the global benchmark (85%). But again, the argument of less spoon-feeding is probably of relevance here. There is also quite a large group of students that indicate they are not aware of certain services, hence communicating what is available at the service level is an important area. "Communicate, communicate, communicate" seems to be key to ensuring students are aware what the institution has to offer and where it expects students to take action themselves.

The top three factors that drive study decisions in Europe are Future Career Impact (96%), Institution Reputation (93%) and Specific Programme Title (92%). However, the whole area around employability and career advice is not (yet) Europe's strength, with satisfaction being below the global benchmark for all career support and a 4% lower score when it comes to feeling prepared for future career goals. When moving forward the key advice I would like to share with Higher Education institutions is to take employability seriously. It is not a challenge; it is an opportunity to attract and integrate students and make them recommend their study experience.



Source AIR circle: Attract, Integrate, Recommend: ROUTLEDGE series internationalisation in Higher Education, Cultural understanding as a key skill for employability, Nannette Ripmeester & Darla K. Deardorff

## LARGEST NEGATIVE VARIANCES AGAINST GLOBAL BENCHMARK

(TOP 3)

**-23%**

**The cost of accommodation**

**-20%**

**Access to suitable accommodation**

**-20%**

**Living cost**

## LARGEST POSITIVE VARIANCES AGAINST GLOBAL BENCHMARK

(TOP 3)

**+4%**

**Value for money**

**+4%**

**Making friends from other countries**

**+2%**

**On-campus facilities access**

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

# REGIONAL FOCUS/ Asia

## Student Barometer

2022 AT A GLANCE FINDINGS

### Overall Satisfaction

89%

Overall satisfaction in Asia

2% above global benchmark

71%

would recommend their institution

1% below global benchmark



-6

Asia Net Promoter Score

Global benchmark = 15

82%

agree their current programme is good value for money

6% above global benchmark

[Full at-a-glance findings](#)



Guy Perring,  
Director, i-graduate - Asia

We are lucky enough to have the largest database on global student opinion and in Asia alone we had over 56,000 respondents in 2021. Our focus and rationale has always been to capture as accurately as we can the student experience and in doing so give institutions the tools and data to improve their provision.

Whilst the last two years have been stressful beyond anyone's worst assumptions – it is heartening to see institutions begin to emerge from the crisis with their purpose intact and a real improvement in the areas that we focus on across the Student Barometer.



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Recommendation

One of the key questions we ask is 'How likely is it that you would recommend this institution to family or friend?' The Student Barometer has incredible detail from the provision of catering to the levels of Academics' English, but if there is one touchstone question that top management can focus on, it is whether their students would become active ambassadors for the institution. We know that word of mouth is now the key factor in decision making and positive advocates for your institution are vital in maintaining or increasing student flows. As I travel around Asia and visit institutions it is striking how a few students from a single country can have a positive experience in an institution and then can create a virtuous flow of that nationality to the campus by positive recommendation..

At present, in Asia 19% of students would actively recommend their institution to others whilst 52% would recommend if asked. This is a very similar pattern to the Global level with 21% active recommenders, and 51% if asked.

### Sitting on the fence

The data above also shows that around 23% - 25% globally are sitting on the fence or, in terms of the question we ask, 'would neither encourage nor discourage others from applying'. One in four is quite a large percentage and shows that institutions really need to create more positive future alumni.

Many institutions across Asia ask me how they can get their students recommending their institution to others. There is not that strong sense of alumni networks that, for example, the US has built up.

The key solution is to get the experience right and to exceed expectations for a rich student life. Our data team in the UK do a lot of work on correlating individual questions with recommendation to get a sense of what is important to students and where you can, and should, focus your attention and resources.

In our teaching and learning section – the top three factors correlating with student recommendation are *Programme organisation, Employability and Programme content*. Rightly so since these are the areas regarded as both an institution's responsibility and one where they have significant control over the output.

## HIGHEST LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

(TOP 3)

97%

Faith provision

96%

Disability support

95%

Expert lecturers

## LOWEST LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

(LOWEST 3)

71%

The cost of accommodation

69%

Internet access at my accommodation

64%

Earning money

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Programme Organisation

This goes beyond the smooth organisation of the timetable, extending to students really being able to access the modules/options they want to study. So, a range of choice, ease of enrolment on the desired modules and sensible scheduling options all have an effect on the satisfaction of this score.

## Employability

The actual question we ask is satisfaction with 'learning that will help me get a good job' and it's the implicit connection that the students see between the learning and a future career. There may need to be explicit signposting by the lecturer on why a particular topic is related to a future career and/or specific guidance in the programme guides etc.

## Programme Content

Connected to both items above – but many of the issues I see across Asia are curricula and content that is not up-to-date with current needs or trends in industry. Systems of QA approval can hamper quick changes to curricula especially in dynamic areas such as IT. Feedback from students, staff and employers make it clear that there is a growing disconnect between what's learnt in the classroom and the reality in the workplace. Those institutions who have linked up with employers directly to shape the curricula have had more success in keeping their programme content relevant. This same initiative can also improve perceptions around employability and students' feelings of being prepared for employment.

## LARGEST NEGATIVE VARIANCES AGAINST GLOBAL BENCHMARK

(TOP 3)

**-7%**

**Internet access at my accommodation**

**-4%**

**Internet access on campus**

**-2%**

**The quality of accommodation**

## LARGEST POSITIVE VARIANCES AGAINST GLOBAL BENCHMARK

(TOP 3)

**+8%**

**Careers advice**

**+8%**

**Counselling**

**+8%**

**Opportunities for work experience**



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Value for Money

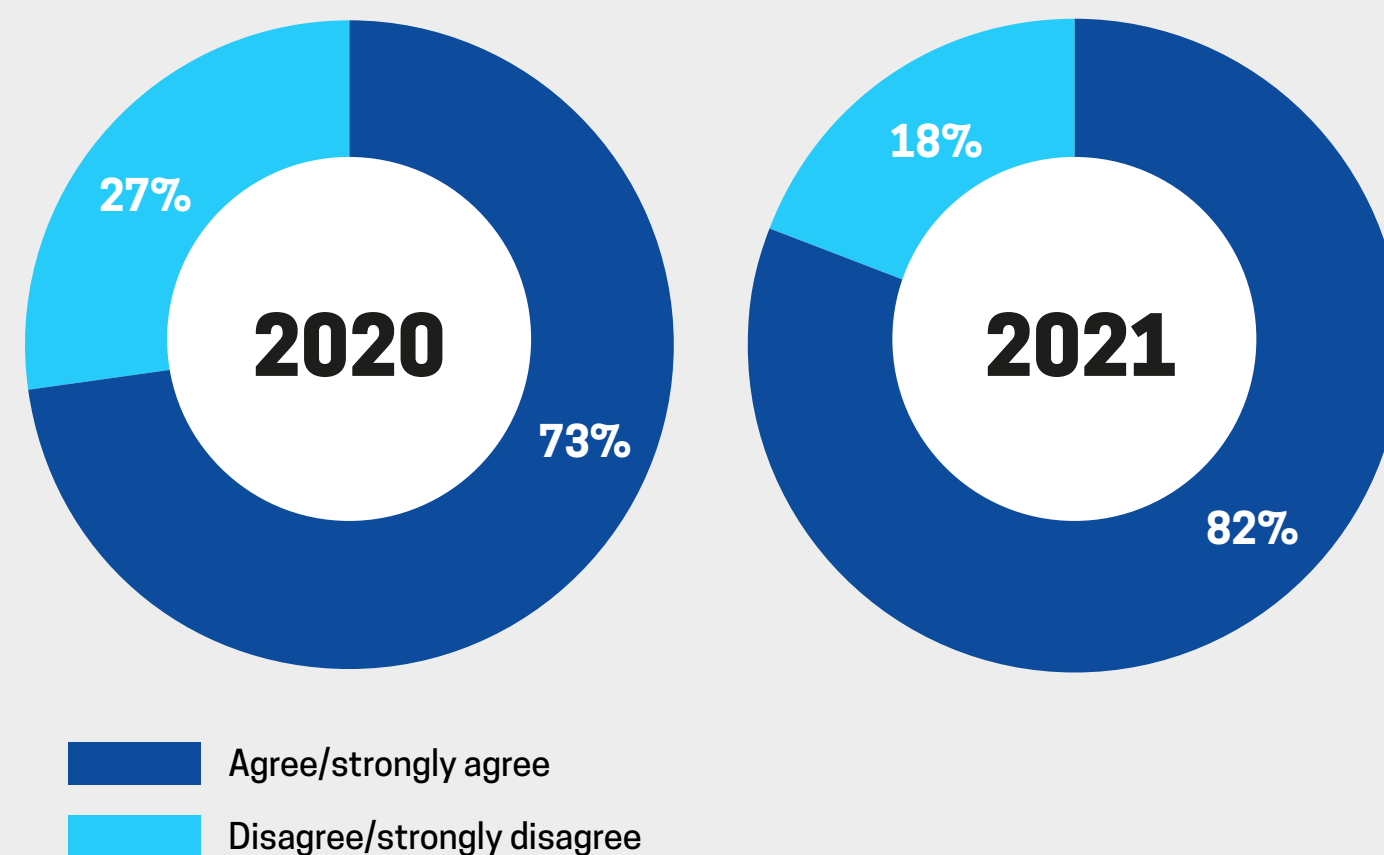
The debate about value for money has reached a new crescendo globally fuelled by the combination of campus closures and also growing concerns about graduate unemployment with even more philosophical debates about the value of Higher Education itself.

Across Asia there is far more of a transactional view of Higher Education with the need to see a clear pathway to future employment.

The closure of campuses in 2020 led to a questioning of value for money - with 27% of students across Asia disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that their programme offered good value for money.

In 2021 with the re-opening of campus and improvement of provision of online/hybrid learning we have seen an improvement and although 18% of students are still concerned about value for money, 82% now agree or indeed strongly agree that their course offers good value for money.

### Students agreeing/disagreeing their programme offered good value for money



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

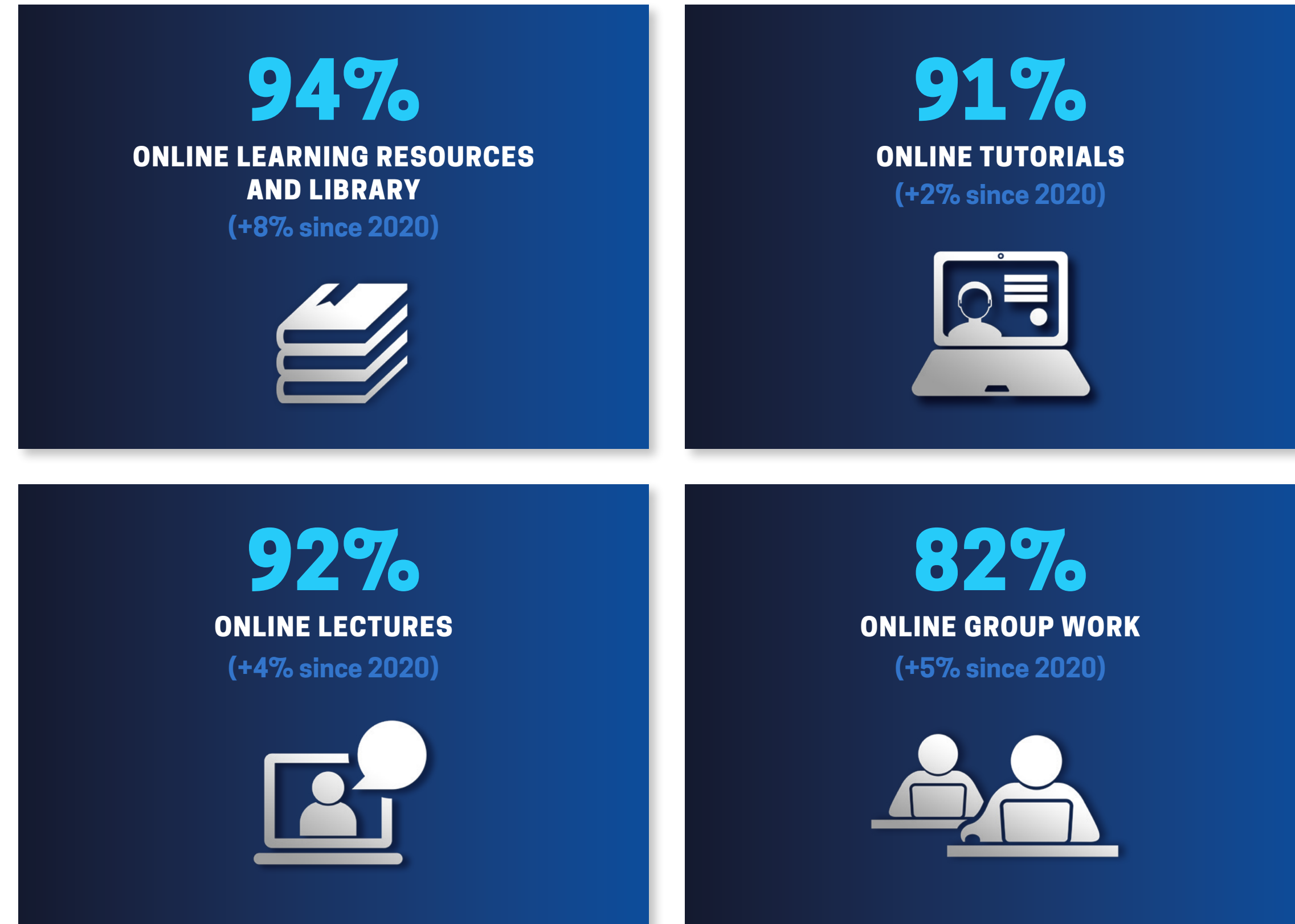
By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Rises in satisfaction with the online learning experience

Institutions across Asia show high levels of satisfaction with online learning, and since 2020 we have seen increases across the board in satisfaction with all aspects of online learning:



Note the score for online group work lags behind the other indices despite improvements since 2020. Despite the technology and increase in lecturers' skills it is still problematic to replicate group work in an online environment.



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

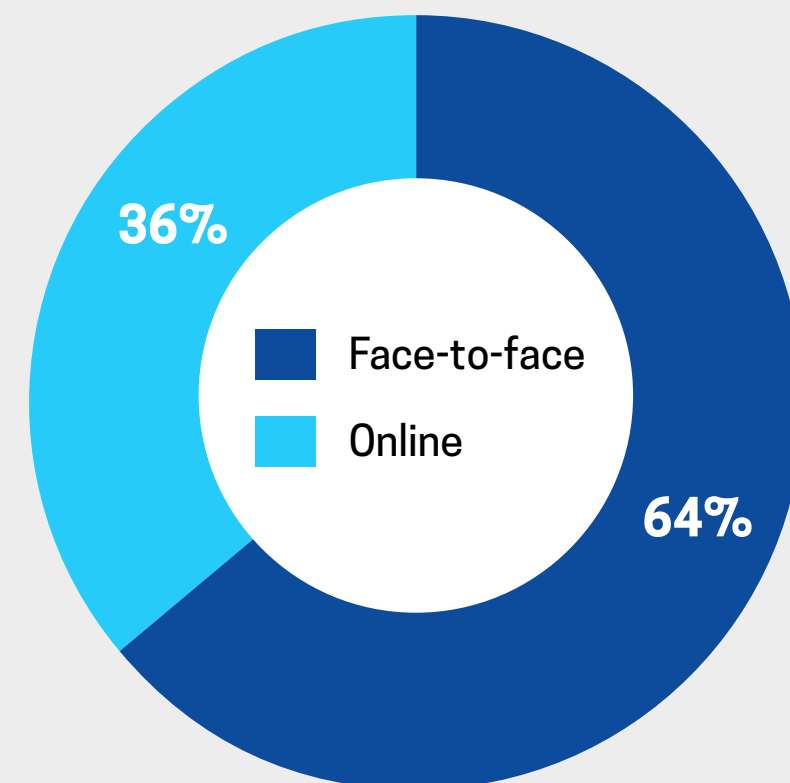
By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Getting back to campus

The flip side of this is a growing reluctance to return to campus! This has been expressed in both our quantitative and qualitative data (open comments) with a number of students expressing concerns about the return to campus. This is both concerns about health – but also a level of comfort that they now have in the online environment coupled with lifestyle adjustments that have allowed them to work part-time or be a care-giver at home..

In numerous conversations with VC, PVCs and staff there is a sense of struggles to get students back to full-time campus.

### 2021 preference for teaching mode



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## A sense of disengagement

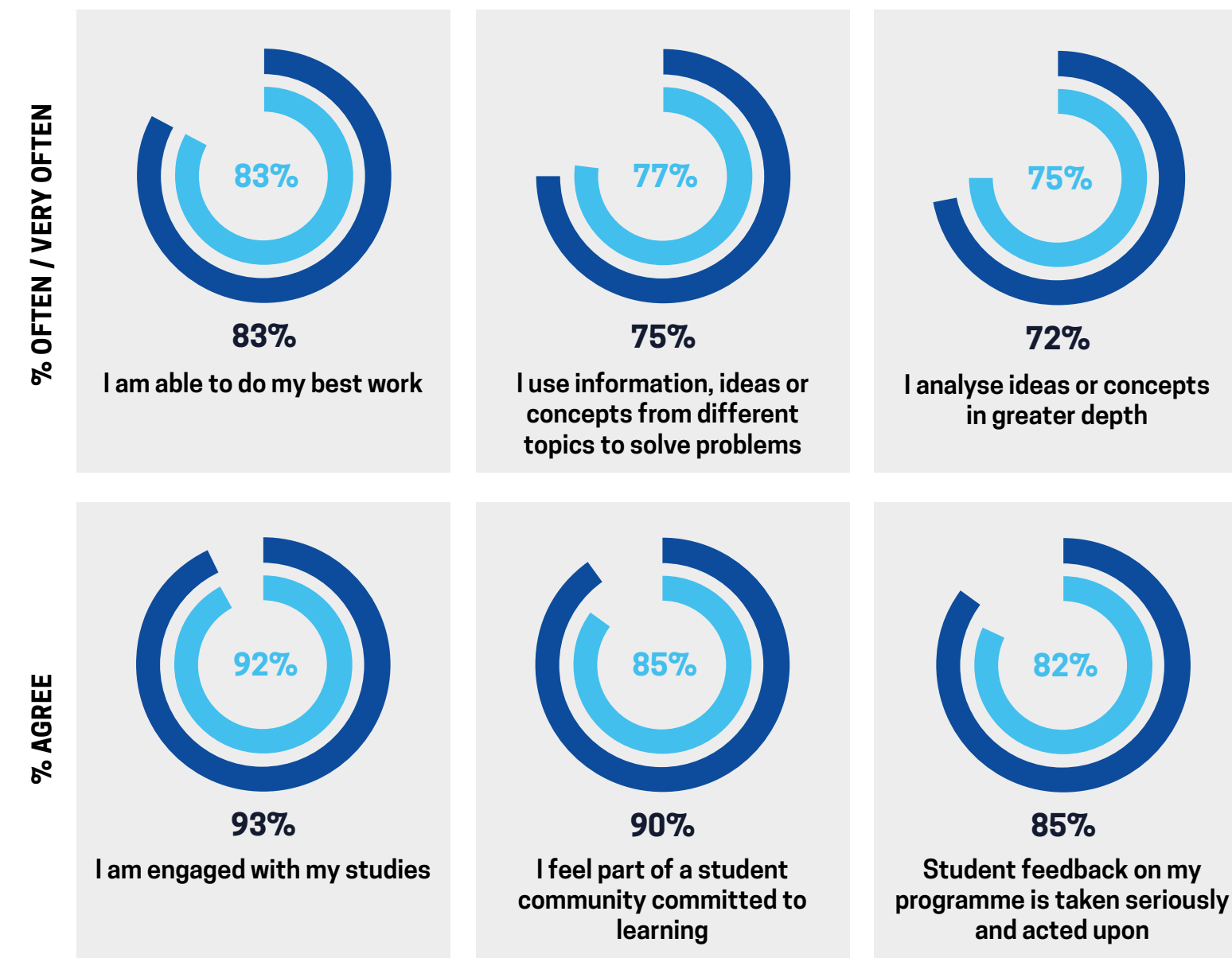
A series of fascinating articles in the Chronicle of Higher Education reveals a growing concern amongst institutions and academics that students are disengaged with both their studies and their institution.

The Chronicle\* recently asked faculty members to share their experiences with student disengagement this academic year. More than 100 people wrote in to describe a disconcerting level of disconnection among students, using words like “defeated,” “exhausted,” and “overwhelmed.”

Our own data is perhaps a little more positive, especially across Asia, but concerns remain.

### Learning engagement challenges

■ Asia ■ Global



Although 90% of students in Asia ‘feel part of a student community committed to learning’ compared to 85% in our global benchmark, this still means 1 in 10 do not, and this should raise some alarm bells.

\*A Stunning Level of Student Disconnection by Beth McMurtrie, Chronicle of Higher Education April 5th 2022



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Support Services

In last year's report I had a real sense that many of the support services had really benefitted from the switch to online. Some large scale public Asian institutions had a very entrenched bureaucratic approach and students found themselves wandering around large tropical campuses clutching stacks of paper as they went from registration to finance to housing etc. The pandemic meant that they could do all this online and both students and indeed the services themselves have been fortunately reluctant to go back to the old way of doing things.

In some key areas such as Careers Advice (95%), Wellbeing Support (94%) and the Student Council (94%) we have seen very high levels of satisfaction across Asia.

## Conclusion

So, we trust that the institutions we work with across Asia benefit from the insight our data can bring and I'm very privileged to see the openness in which they receive our reports and strive to take action to improve the student experience year on year. Asia has performed well on the global Higher Education stage, recording favourable student satisfaction scores through the pandemic, and building on that trend as students return to campus in 2021. Asian institutions outperform global benchmarks in key areas of Overall satisfaction with learning and living, and most notably perceptions of Value for Money. Indeed, the region does comparatively well on many of the indices in the Student Barometer, with just a few areas of concern mainly around academic engagement. If institutions can use the insight gathered, alongside the otherwise strong student satisfaction levels to turn this particular area around, then Asian Higher Education will be in a strong place going into this post-pandemic landscape.



*“Mahidol have found the Student Barometer an invaluable tool in evaluating the student experience and benchmarking our performance across both Asian and Global institutions which contributes to our goal of continuous improvement in all aspects of the student experience.”*

**PROF. DR. PATCHAREE LERTRIT, (M.D.), DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES, MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY (THAILAND)**

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

# REGIONAL FOCUS/ North America

## International Student Barometer

2022 AT A GLANCE FINDINGS

### Overall Satisfaction



Full at-a-glance findings



Nannette Ripmeester  
Director i-graduate N. America and Europe

When conducting a dive into the International Student Barometer (ISB) results 2021-22 and looking at what international students studying in North America think, what stands out the most is the high score of satisfaction for nearly every element. The overall satisfaction is 90%, 5% above the global benchmark. 81% of international students studying at a North American institution would recommend their institution to prospective students (5% above global), and 81% agree their current course is value for money which is 6% above the global benchmark. Does that mean there is no room for improvement for any of the participating ISB institutions in Canada and the US? There definitely is; just ask any of the institutions after they received their data and their personal feedback presentation – each of them is aware there are areas they want to work on for the next survey round to see what improvements they are able to realise. Data-driven insight truly helps Higher Education institutions (HEIs) to move forward their service level and the marketing and recruitment of international students.



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Every study experience starts with the student making the decision for a particular institution and over time we have seen the importance of careers and employability increase. The North American Higher Education market is no exception here. The number one reason when deciding where to study is careers, with future career impact at 97% being 1% above the global benchmark, followed by university reputation and earning potential (both at 95%). The attraction of the region as first choice for international education is strong for North America. If we look at what helped students to choose their institution, we find the college website is most important (49%), followed by education agents and family (both at 32%). The major nationality group at North American institutions is Indian students and for them the website of the institution is even more important at 60%, followed by league tables or rankings (43%) and education agents (36%).

Most of the onboarding of newly arrived students happened online (59% in North America vs 43% globally) in the academic year 2021/22. The satisfaction with the orientation is higher at North American institutions, irrespective of whether that was virtual or face-to-face. The overall arrival satisfaction is high at 91% (global benchmark 89%); in particular, when it comes to providing information, the North American institutions stand out.

In the learning area, the overall satisfaction is at 91% (global benchmark 89%), with 27% saying they are very satisfied, compare with 20% in the global benchmark. The virtual learning environment stands out as doing well too. It does not come as a surprise that when students choose a HEI because of the impact it may have on their future career, they also find employability<sup>7</sup> and careers advice from faculty members important. These latter two show an even higher correlation with recommendation than the global data, highlighting the heightened importance of graduate outcomes for North American institutions. Tourism and hospitality students are the most satisfied with regards to employability; Venezuelan students studying in North America are the least satisfied in this area.

<sup>7</sup> ISB question: 'Learning that will help me get a good job'

## CHOOSING AN INSTITUTION

### TOP DECISION FACTORS

97%

Top decision factors

95%

University reputation

95%

Earning potential

## HIGHEST LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

(TOP 3)

98%

Faith provision

97%

Student Association/Union

97%

Library service

## LOWEST LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

(LOWEST 3)

62%

Earning money

58%

Financial support

58%

The cost of accommodation

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

With regards to the living area, overall satisfaction is slightly higher than global (87% vs 86%). There is room for improvement when it comes to the ability to travel to other places, the surroundings of the campus and feeling safe and secure on campus. Also, the cost and quality of accommodation are lagging compared against the global benchmarks. After visa advice, good contacts for the future is the most important measure to recommend an institution, again reinforcing the importance of employability for those students that choose to study in North America. International students that are about to graduate feel relatively well prepared for the next step after graduation with 75% against 68% globally saying they are well prepared for their career goals.

When looking at the inclusivity questions, we see a wide variety between regions and although many North American institutions are scoring close to the global benchmark, the comparison to other regions, in particular Europe, shows there is room for improvement for the North American market to create a more inclusive study environment.



*“Across the university, people want to know about the areas for improvement, and particularly appreciate the benchmarking information so they can see how we compare against other institutions. The evidence-base provided by the ISB is also reliable and robust enough to contribute to the more high-level administrators’ meetings.”*

**XI YU, EVALUATION SPECIALIST AT THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AND SCHOLAR SERVICES UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA (UOFM) TWIN CITIES**

## LARGEST NEGATIVE VARIANCES AGAINST GLOBAL BENCHMARK

(TOP 3)

**-5%**

**Transportation links to other places**

**-4%**

**Feeling safe and secure on campus**

**-4%**

**The surroundings outside the college**

## LARGEST POSITIVE VARIANCES AGAINST GLOBAL BENCHMARK

(TOP 3)

**+3%**

**Setting up a bank account**

**+8%**

**Careers support - employment**

**+8%**

**Opportunities for work experience**



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

# REGIONAL FOCUS/ Australia

## International Student Barometer

AT A GLANCE FINDINGS

### Overall Satisfaction



Stephen Connelly  
Director i-graduate Australia

30 institutions participated in the 2021 Australian International Student Barometer (ISB), 25 universities and five non-university higher and vocational education providers. 30,180 international students responded to the survey (a response rate of 19%), which was conducted between March and June, the third academic semester in Australia across 2020 and 2021 to be impacted by the global pandemic.

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Covid disruption

The survey identified students whose studies were impacted by the pandemic – 94% of respondents in Australia indicated that their studies had been moved online at some point as a result of COVID-related disruption – and interrogated their disrupted study experience, including online studies.<sup>8</sup> Overall, international students in Australia rated their institutions' response to the pandemic on par with the global benchmark (80% satisfied or very satisfied). Satisfaction with the online learning experience at Australian institutions during the pandemic slightly under-performed global benchmarks (76% compared to global benchmark of 78% satisfied or very satisfied).

## Decision factors and influences

Future career impact was the most important factor in choosing a study destination (96% of respondents), followed closely by qualification and university reputations (both 95%). Cost of living and cost of study were top 10 factors, but environmental concerns ranked #23 behind opportunities for further study (#17) and opportunities to work while studying (#18).

University websites (48% of respondents), education agents (44%) and family (36%) were the top three influencers in the decision to study overseas, with social networking sites just scraping into the top 10 (20%). Only 16% of respondents identified online advertising as an influence, 11% university prospectuses and just 7% independent websites. With the exception of education agents, who have more influence over international students bound for Australia than for other destinations, the top 23 influences on decision making for international students in Australia mirrored the results in the ISB global benchmark.

90% of respondents to the question Which league tables or rankings helped you to decide where to study?<sup>9</sup> said the QS World Rankings influenced their decision, compared with 53% for the THE World University Rankings and 20% for the Academic Ranking of World Universities, an interesting snapshot of the influence of the three major global university ranking systems.

<sup>8</sup> Regular distance learners completed a different survey, the Online Education Barometer, and their responses were not included in ISB results. Respondents to the Australian 2021 ISB were students who were either onshore at the time of the survey, or offshore as a result of the border closure but with the intention of either commencing or continuing their studies onshore (offshore/online).

<sup>9</sup> (n=2,473)



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

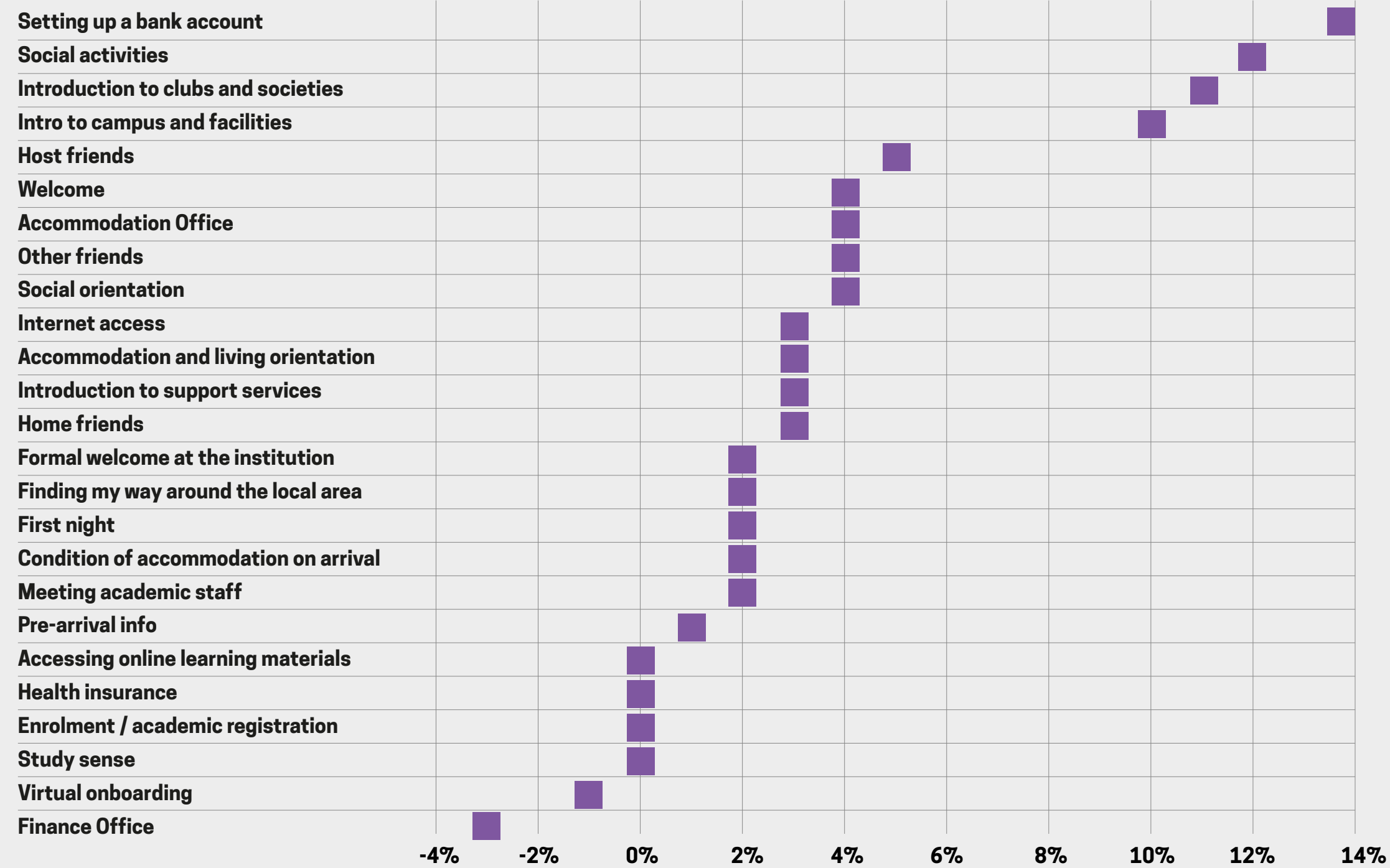
Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Satisfaction levels

International students in Australia rated 23 out of 25 elements of their arrival experience better than the global benchmark, an aspect of the international student experience where Australian institutions generally perform well.

### The arrivals experience for international students in Australia vs global benchmarks



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

In contrast, Australia marginally lagged most global benchmarks in the ISB, but it must be remembered that lockdowns and the lived experience of international students in Australia were much harder than in many of the countries in the global benchmark, where borders remained largely open.

	AUSTRALIA	GLOBAL ISB
Recommendation	67%	72%
Overall satisfaction	79%	82%
Net promoter score	-9	1
Value for money	62%	69%
Arrival overall	84%	85%
Learning overall	80%	81%
Living overall	85%	83%
Support overall	82%	83%
Overall happiness	85%	85%
Career goal preparation	61%	64%



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Career impact

Whilst the overall response to the question *How well has your experience prepared you for your career goals?* from international students in Australia was below the global benchmark, responses to more specific questions in this section of the survey were encouraging, with Australia marginally outperforming the global benchmarks on three metrics, as in the image below.

### FUTURE PLANS AND CAREER PROSPECTS

(INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN AUSTRALIA)

**35%**

of students are planning on entering employment

**35%**

of students are planning on going travelling or are undecided

**30%**

of students are planning on doing further study

	AUSTRALIA	GLOBAL ISB
Satisfied that their programme will help them to get a better job	81%	80%
Satisfied with making good contacts for the future	75%	74%
Satisfied with the career advice from academics	76%	74%

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## Domestic vs international student responses

Six Australian universities also surveyed domestic students (17,981 responses), showing higher levels of overall satisfaction compared with international students.

	AUSTRALIA SB <i>Domestic students</i>	AUSTRALIA ISB <i>International students</i>
Recommendation	72%	67%
Overall satisfaction	85%	79%
Net promoter score	-8	-9
Value for money	70%	62%
Arrival overall	87%	84%
Learning overall	83%	80%
Living overall	89%	85%
Support overall	84%	82%
Overall happiness	87%	85%
Career goal preparation	60%	61%



## CONTENTS

### Foreword

### Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

### Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

### International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

### Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

### Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

### Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

### Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

While institutions did remarkable work supporting their international students during the pandemic, including financial support, the lived experience of those who were onshore in Australia as mentioned above was tough – unable to receive the same federal financial support as other members of the community, they were left largely to their own devices as many of the businesses and industries that relied on international students for casual workforce resources shut down. That overall satisfaction levels only lag domestic students by a few percentage points in most categories in the table above is a testament to both the resilience of international students, the support they received from their institutions and the quality of the offshore/online experience for those who waited patiently for the border to reopen. As the international student market now turns back towards Australia the federal government in particular needs to ensure that it matches the support that institutions and many members of the broader community showed international students during two very difficult years.

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

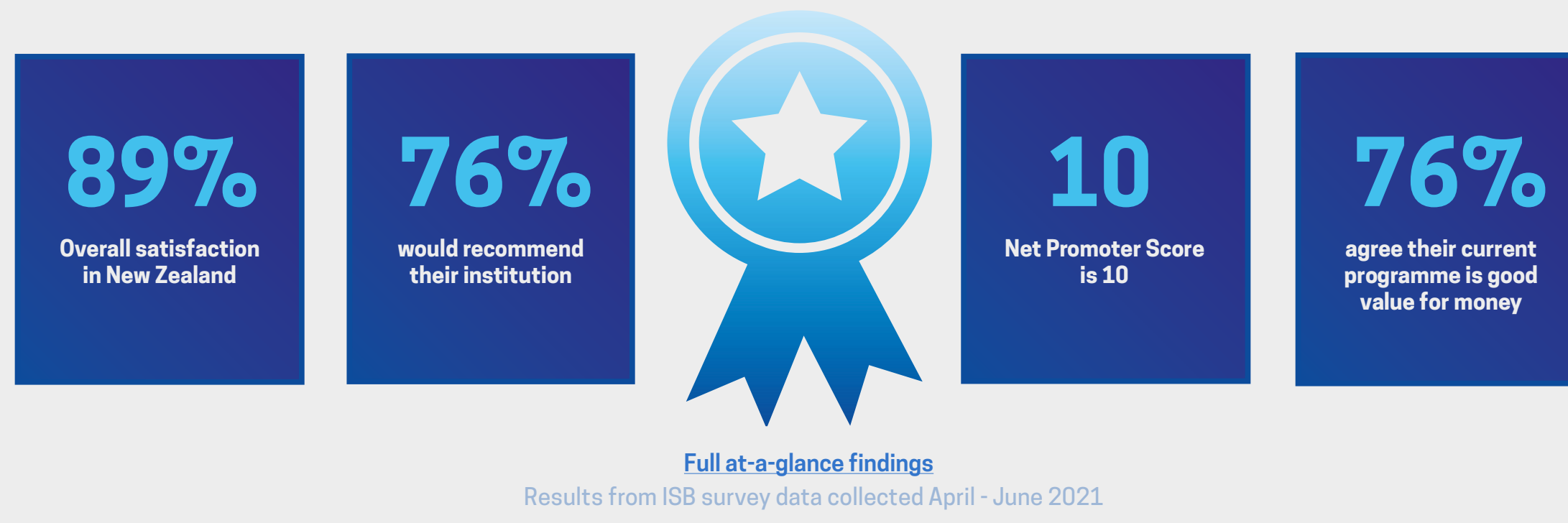
By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

# REGIONAL FOCUS/ New Zealand

## International Student Barometer

2021 AT A GLANCE FINDINGS - NEW ZEALAND

### Overall Satisfaction



Kyla Steenhardt,  
Director, i-graduate - New Zealand

In 2021, despite COVID disruptions and the fact that a sizeable proportion of New Zealand's international university students were studying online in their home country, international student satisfaction remained relatively high. As reported in i-graduate's [2021 Global student experience paper](#), New Zealand's results in the 2021 International Student Barometer (ISB) compared well against the global benchmark<sup>10</sup>, generally remaining similar to pre-COVID satisfaction levels unlike the global benchmark which saw a notable fall.

In terms of overall satisfaction, for example, 89% of international students studying with New Zealand universities were satisfied or very satisfied with their university experience overall, compared to 82% globally. 76% would recommend their institution, compared to 72% globally; and 76% agreed or strongly agreed that their programme was good value for money, compared to 72% globally.

<sup>10</sup> Responses collected from 66,469 international students studying in 14 countries. Fieldwork periods March to June 2021 (predominantly southern hemisphere institutions) and October 2020 to February 2021 (predominantly northern hemisphere institutions).



## CONTENTS

### Foreword

### Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

### Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

### International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

### Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

### Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

### Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

### Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhardt, Director i-graduate New Zealand

One year on and with another northern hemisphere ISB survey wave undertaken in late 2021 – and a much more normalised situation COVID-wise in most participating countries and institutions – how do New Zealand's 2021 ISB results compare to the updated global benchmark<sup>11</sup>?

The answer is, relatively well.

The latest global ISB benchmark seems to indicate that international student satisfaction globally is again increasing. With a return towards an in-person, on-campus experience and the associated increased social interaction in participating northern hemisphere universities, this is not surprising.

However, even with the most recent ISB in New Zealand undertaken at a comparatively 'worse' time in the pandemic, overall satisfaction amongst international students at New Zealand universities remains higher than the latest global benchmark. Recommendation, value for money and overall happiness scores are all similar to the global benchmark.

	NZ 2021 ISB	PREVIOUS GLOBAL ISB & NZ comparison		LATEST GLOBAL ISB & NZ comparison	
Overall satisfaction	89%	82%	+7%	85%	+4%
Recommendation	76%	72%	+4%	75%	+1%
Net Promoter Score	10	1	+9	7	+4
Value for money	76%	69%	+7%	75%	+1%
Overall happiness	89%	85%	+5%	89%	+1%

<sup>11</sup> Updated Global benchmark comprises responses collected from 92,629 international students studying in 15 countries. Fieldwork periods September to December 2021 (predominantly northern hemisphere institutions), March to June 2021 (predominantly southern hemisphere institutions) and a small number of responses from northern hemisphere institutions in October 2020 to February 2021.

## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Looking at satisfaction in each of the four main areas of the ISB too shows slightly higher levels of satisfaction with arrival, learning and living overall amongst international students enrolled at New Zealand universities than amongst international students globally. Satisfaction with support services overall was similar in New Zealand to satisfaction globally.

	NZ 2021 ISB	PREVIOUS GLOBAL ISB & NZ comparison	LATEST GLOBAL ISB & NZ comparison
Arrival Overall	90%	85% +4%	88% +2%
Learning Overall	88%	81% +8%	85% +3%
Living Overall	89%	83% +5%	85% +3%
Support Overall	86%	83% +3%	85% 0%

Not all results are positive for New Zealand. International students at New Zealand universities were less likely than international students globally to be satisfied with some elements of the living experience, for example, transport links to other places, the cost of living, the design and quality of the campus buildings, and the quality of the external campus environment; this is true regardless of which global benchmark scores are compared against. International students studying with New Zealand universities were also less likely to be satisfied with the counselling service at their institution, and postgraduate research students with opportunities to teach.

In general, though, New Zealand universities as a whole are performing well in terms of international student experience.



## CONTENTS

### Foreword

### Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

### Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

### International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

### Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

### Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

### Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

### Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

After more than two years of COVID disruptions and border restrictions, New Zealand is reopening fully to international students from the end of July 2022. The fact that New Zealand universities have managed to continue providing a good experience to international students – both onshore and offshore – throughout the difficult last couple of years will be invaluable going forward. It means the arrival/return of students who have begun or continued studying offshore with New Zealand universities, provides potential messaging to prospective students and will drive recommendations from current and past students. It certainly bodes well for the experience of international students coming to New Zealand in the future.

Time will tell, and the results of New Zealand's next biennial International Student Barometer survey running in April 2023 will give greater understanding to just how well New Zealand universities have fared compared to their global counterparts.

## CONTENTS

Foreword

### Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

### Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

### International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

### Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

### Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

### Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

### Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

### Regional Focus: New Zealand

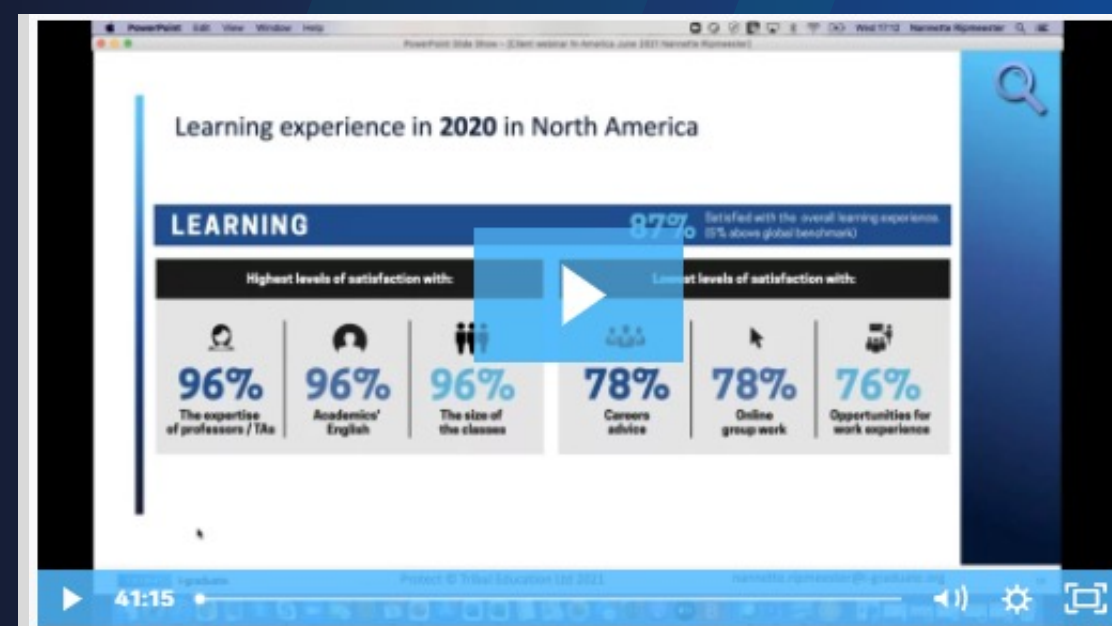
By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand



## Watch

### Improving student experience, satisfaction & recommendation in your region

In these region-specific webinars, our International Specialists look at how leading Higher Education Institutions are using the world's largest benchmark of student experience, the International Student Barometer (ISB), to ensure their strategies improve the student experience and the reputation of their institution, and to inform effective marketing and recruitment.



MORE

i-graduate delivers comparative insights to the education sector worldwide, helping institutions enhance their competitive advantage and develop truly global graduates.

Our suite of tools helps education institutions around the world build competitor advantage by benchmarking the student experience across their operations, and evaluating their level of internationalisation.

Track and compare the decision-making, expectations, perceptions and intentions of your domestic and international students from application to graduation

STUDENT BAROMETER

Measure and understand the experience of your online students

ONLINE EDUCATION BAROMETER

Understand the opinions of education agents worldwide, and develop competitive strategies to foster more effective agent relationships

AGENT BAROMETER

Measure and benchmark the size and shape of your institution's outbound student mobility programme

BENCHMARKING LEARNING ABROAD



## CONTENTS

Foreword

Student Employability and Labour Mobility

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

The strategy and data supporting Curtin's Transnational Education success

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Value for Money: Are international students satisfied with their investment?

By Josie Ruddick, Senior Client Support Officer

International student happiness and wellbeing – how it's tracking with the return towards pre-COVID normality

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

Regional Focus: UK & Ireland

By Mellissa Telka Oliver, Senior Client Support Officer

Regional Focus: Europe

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Asia

By Guy Perring, Director i-graduate Asia

Regional Focus: North America

By Nannette Ripmeester, Director i-graduate N.America and Europe

Regional Focus: Australia

By Stephen Connelly, Director, i-graduate Australia

Regional Focus: New Zealand

By Kyla Steenhart, Director i-graduate New Zealand

## References

### ARTICLE: STUDENT EMPLOYABILITY AND LABOUR MOBILITY: THE BENEFITS OF ADDRESSING EMPLOYABILITY - PAGE 03

“Striving for balance, advocating for change – the Deloitte global 22 GenZ and Millennial survey”, <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/global/Documents/deloitte-2022-genz-millennial-survey.pdf>

“Chinese International Students’ Expectations About Career Counseling”, Yue Li, Nancy Goodrich Mitts, and Susan C. Whiston, Journal of Career Development, SAGE, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0894845319832672>

“Global Employability: Common Challenges in Preparing Students for a Global World of Work”, Sevi Christoforou and Nannette Ripmeester, CAPA Career Integration: Reviewing the Impact (pp 98-101), <https://www.labourmobility.com/capa-career-integration-vol-3/>

### ARTICLE: VALUE FOR MONEY: ARE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS SATISFIED WITH THEIR INVESTMENT? - PAGE 09

Huff Post (2017). Available at: [https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/jennifer-creery/university-contact-hours\\_b\\_11311690.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/jennifer-creery/university-contact-hours_b_11311690.html)



**TRIBAL** **i-graduate**

[www.i-graduate.org](http://www.i-graduate.org)

 [@igraduate](https://twitter.com/igraduate)

 [Linkedin](https://www.linkedin.com/company/igraduate)

 [info@i-graduate.org](mailto:info@i-graduate.org)

