

# Australian Outbound Student Mobility

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## Snapshot

### Executive Summary

One in eight Australian undergraduates studies overseas: 12.3% of completing Australian undergraduates in Australian universities undertake international study experiences. 6.5% of international study experiences from Australia are for a year, 36.7% for a semester and 56.8% for less than a semester. 37% of international study experiences are to Europe, 33% to Asia and 23% to the Americas.

Australia has created a typology of six types of international study experiences: **Semester or Year Exchanges, Other Semester or Year Programs, Short Term Programs** of less than one semester including study tours and language tours, **Placements or Practical Training** including internships or clinical placements, **Research** and **Other**. In 2011, 94.3% of all these experiences were for credit.

Americas 36% and Europe 47% dominate as destinations for exchanges and other long experiences. Only 15% are to Asia. US, UK, Canada, France, Germany, Sweden, ahead of China, are the top six destinations. US, UK and Canada account for 47% of destinations for exchanges and other long experiences.

Asia dominates short term programs, with 52% to Asia and another 3% to Oceania. 32% go to Europe. China, Italy, US, India, France, Indonesia are the top six destinations.

To a lesser extent Asia also dominates internships or practical training experiences, with 44% to Asia and another 8% to Oceania. 22% go to Europe and 17% to the Americas. US, UK, Germany, India, Singapore, Malaysia are the top six destinations, ahead of China.

Short term international study programs and international placements are important in diversifying Australian student mobility away from the Americas and Europe, specifically away from international student exchanges with US, UK and Canada, where students can study in English at a western university, presumably bringing back to the Australian university credit for four subjects just like they would have studied in Australia.

Any prescription that international study experiences must be for at least a semester would tend to impose a US centric model on all international study destinations globally. Such a prescription also would have the effect potentially of writing off as valueless 82% of all Australian international study experiences to Asia including 85% of all experiences to China.

### Introduction

This is a snapshot of Australia's outbound student mobility program, including comparisons with the US study abroad program.

International Directors from 38 Australian universities participate in the Australian Universities International Directors' Forum (AUIDF), established in 2002. AUIDF annually conducts a survey of outbound study experiences of students in Australian universities. The results are released annually at the Australian International Education Conference.

36 Australian universities reported 20,906 outbound international study experiences in 2011.

**Open Doors 2012** reported that 273,966 US students studied abroad in 2010/11.

## For Credit

**Open Doors** counts study abroad for credit. All 273,966 US students studied abroad for credit in 2010/11

Australia chooses to count all international study experiences. In 2011, 94.3% of all experiences were for credit, 1.2% not for credit but recognised for purposes such as development of international skills and 4.5% not for credit.

## Participation in International Study Experiences

From Australia, 13,629 of the international study experiences were undertaken by Australian undergraduate students. In the 36 universities, there were 110,992 Australian undergraduate completions in 2011.

The number of international study experiences undertaken by Australian undergraduate students in 2011 was equivalent to 12.3% of domestic undergraduate completions in 2011, suggesting that 12.3% of completing Australian undergraduates in Australian universities undertake international study experiences.

The analysis of the US study abroad scene, in terms of access or participation, is very similar.

From US, 233,984 of the study abroad students were undergraduates pursuing bachelor degrees. There were 1,698,854 bachelor degree completions in 2010/11.

The number of study abroad experiences undertaken by US undergraduate students pursuing bachelor degrees in 2010/11 was equivalent to 13.8% of bachelor degree completions in 2010/11, suggesting that 13.8% of US undergraduates completing bachelor degrees studied abroad prior to graduation.

**Table 1**  
**Participation in International Study Experiences**

	<b>Australian Undergraduates</b>	<b>US Bachelor Students</b>
<b>Experiences</b>	13,629	233,984
<b>Completions</b>	110,992	1,698,854
<b>Participation Rate</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>13.8%</b>

## Duration of International Study Experiences

From Australia, 6.5% of international study experiences in 2011 were for a year, 36.7% were for a semester and 56.8% were for less than a semester.

The analysis of the US study abroad scene, in terms of duration of study abroad experiences, is very similar. From US, 3.9% of study abroad experiences in 2010/11 were for a year, 38.0% were for a semester and 58.1% were for less than a semester.

**Table 2**  
**Duration of International Study Experiences**

	Australia	US
<b>One Year</b>	6.5%	3.9%
<b>One Semester</b>	36.7%	38.0%
<b>Short Term</b>	56.8%	58.1%

### Open Doors 2012 comments:

Study abroad programs and students are increasingly diverse. Non-European destinations continue to grow in popularity. More students are selecting mid-length [typically one semester] and short-term [less than a semester] programs as US campuses diversify their study abroad programs with shorter programs for students whose major and/or personal and family obligations restrict their ability to spend an entire semester or academic year abroad.

From US, short term programs grew from 47.7% of all study abroad in 2001/02 to 58.1% in 2010/11.

## Fields of Education

In Australia in 2011, Management and Commerce (16%), Society and Culture (16%) and Health (13%) were the most commonly reported fields with students in combined degrees making up in total 14%. Comparisons with US are not simple, but relatively more US students from Society and Culture studied abroad in 2010/11, including 23% from Social Sciences, 11% from Humanities and 6% from Foreign Languages. 21% were from Business and Management and 5% from Health.

One apparent difference between US and Australia is in Health. Students from Health made up 5% of study abroad students from US in 2010/11 and 13% of international study experiences from Australia in 2011. From Australia in 2011, 50% of the 2,753 students in Health were undertaking clinical placements.

## Destinations

In terms of destinations, comparisons between US and Australia are not simple. US is Australia's largest destination, the destination for 15% of all international study experiences from Australia. Australia is the sixth largest destination for US study abroad students, the destination for 4% of US study abroad students. Further, US allows a response Multiple Destinations, the Australian study does not.

With these qualifications, destinations by regions for most students are compared in the table.

**Table 3**  
**Destinations of International Study Experiences: Regions**

	From Australia	From US
Europe	37%	55%
Asia	33%	12%
Americas	23%	15%
Africa and Middle East	3%	7%
Oceania	3%	5%

From Australia, the top six destination countries are US, China, UK, Canada, Germany, France. From US the top six destination countries are UK, Italy, Spain, France, China, Australia.

**Table 4**  
**Destination Countries of International Study Experiences**

From Australia		From US	
1. US	7. Italy	1. UK	7. Germany
2. China	8. Malaysia	2. Italy	8. Costa Rica
3. UK	9. Oceania Region	3. Spain	9. Ireland
4. Canada	10. India	4. France	10. Argentina
5. Germany	11. Japan	5. China	11. India
6. France	12. Indonesia	6. Australia	12. South Africa

## Destinations by Type

Australia has created a typology of six types of international study experiences, with detail in Attachment A **Types of International Study Experiences**.

For 2011, the 20,906 international study experiences are split by type in the table.

**Table 5**  
**Types of International Study Experiences**

Exchange	36.8%
Other Semester or Year Programs	2.3%
Short Term Programs	34.1%
Placements or Practical Training	13.0%
Research	11.7%
Other	2.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,906</b>

There are stark differences in destinations between the types of international study experiences from Australia.

**Table 6**  
**Destinations of International Study Experiences: Types and Regions**

	<b>Exchange/Other Long</b>	<b>Short Term</b>	<b>Placements</b>
<b>Europe</b>	47%	32%	22%
<b>Asia</b>	15%	52%	44%
<b>Americas</b>	36%	10%	17%
<b>Africa and Middle East</b>	1%	3%	9%
<b>Oceania</b>	0%	3%	8%

**Table 7**  
**Destination Countries and Types of International Study Experiences**

<b>Exchange/Long</b>	<b>Short Term</b>	<b>Placements</b>
1. US	1. China	1. US
2. UK	2. Italy	2. UK
3. Canada	3. US	3. Germany
4. France	4. India	4. India
5. Germany	5. France	5. Singapore
6. Sweden	6. Indonesia	6. Malaysia

China is the seventh ranked country for exchange/other long experiences and for placements.

From the opposite perspective, exchanges and other long experiences make up 39% of all international study experiences by Australian students, including 60% of experiences to the Americas, 50% to Europe and 15% to Asia. Exchanges and other long experiences make up 58% of experiences to US and 15% to China.

The Americas 36% and Europe 47% dominate as destinations for exchanges and other long experiences, making up 82% of all destinations. Only 15% are to Asia. US, UK and Canada account for 47% of destinations for exchanges and other long experiences. Students can study in English at a western university, presumably taking back to the Australian university credit for four subjects very similar to those that would have been undertaken in Australia.

Asia dominates short term programs from Australia, which include international study tours, international language tours and summer or winter programs, with 52% to Asia and another 3% to Oceania. 32% go to Europe.

To a lesser extent Asia also dominates international placements or practical training experiences from Australia, including work experiences or internships or business placements or clinical placements, with 44% to Asia and another 8% to Oceania. 22% go to Europe and 17% to the Americas.

Short term international study programs and international placements are important in diversifying Australian student mobility away from the Americas and Europe, specifically away from international student exchanges with English speaking western universities in US, UK and Canada.

Any prescription that international study experiences must be for at least a semester would tend to impose a US centric model on all international study destinations globally, Such a prescription also would have the effect potentially of writing off as valueless 82% of all Australian international study experiences in Asia including 85% of all experiences to China.

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### Types of International Study Experiences

#### 1. Semester or Year Exchanges for Credit

- covering outgoing international exchanges of a semester or longer, generally undertaken on a reciprocal basis, with fees mutually waived.

#### 2. Other Semester or Year Programs for Credit including

- outgoing international study abroad, on a non-exchange, fee paying or similar basis
- double or dual degree programs (involving one degree from the Australian university plus one degree from an overseas institution) or joint degree programs between an Australian university and an overseas university
- projects or periods of study overseas of at least a semester in duration as part of the structure of the Australian degree.

#### 3. Short Term Programs of less than one semester including

- short term outgoing international exchanges of less than one semester
- projects or periods of study overseas of less than a semester in duration as part of the structure of the Australian degree
- outgoing international study tours or study programs from the Australian university by groups of students including faculty tours and in-country tours
- outgoing international language tours from the Australian university by groups of students in country to enhance language skills
- summer or winter or other short term programs of less than a semester based at overseas institutions.

#### 4. Placements or Practical Training including

- work experiences or internships or business placements or clinical placements or service learning placements or sandwich program placements
- university sanctioned volunteering activity conducted overseas.

#### 5. Research including

- research projects overseas towards the Australian degree
- joint or double research degrees or co-tutelle research degrees (where research studies are supervised jointly by academics from an Australian University and an overseas university, typically in France)
- international presentations of research findings or similar, for example at a conference overseas or to a university overseas.

#### 6. Other including

- international conference or similar presentations overseas other than as part of a research degree
- international moots.