

**Senator BACK: Could you give us an indication of the number of overseas students currently enrolled by your members. Secondly, could you give us the number of instances in which overseas students have had occasion to be in dispute with their university which subsequently have not been resolved and have therefore had to go to some sort of independent arbitration.**

Australian Education International data for 2011 indicates that there were 557,424 enrolments by full-fee paying international students in Australia on student visas. The Higher Education sector ranked first by volume of enrolments. The sector recorded growth of 0.1% in enrolments (total of 242,351 students). Universities form at least 90% of the higher education sector in Australia so this equates to roughly 219,000 international students. Please find attached AEI's end of year summary of international student enrolment data for 2011.

**Senator BACK: Secondly, could you give us the number of instances in which overseas students have had occasion to be in dispute with their university which subsequently have not been resolved and have therefore had to go to some sort of independent arbitration.**

Under the ESOS Act, universities are required to have internal and external processes for resolving disputes. In Swinburne's case, 59 complaints were received from their international students via their online complaints portal. One of these appealed externally to the Victorian Ombudsman. The Ombudsman found in the University's favour.

Swinburne are also aware of 10 international students appealing to the Victorian Ombudsman in relation to unsatisfactory progress. All were resolved in the University's favour.

For Swinburne's College programs in which attendance is recorded, they are aware of eight students appealing to the Victorian Ombudsman in relation to the University's finding of non-attendance. All were resolved in the University's favour.

**What are the governmental requirements of international students studying in countries (e.g. Malaysia) where Australian universities have a campus?**

Australian Government regulatory requirements affecting international students apply to those studying in Australia on student visas, not to those studying at offshore campuses.

In relation to Australian education providers operating offshore, providers should be aware of the various Australian regulatory and quality assurance regimes which apply in the transnational education context.

Chief among these are any TEQSA requirements, Universities Australia's Code and Guidelines for Australian universities and the Australian Quality Training Framework.

It is very important for Australian offshore providers to ensure that they are familiar with and comply with any local quality assurance frameworks and regulations of the relevant country for their offshore

location. Where relevant, providers should also refer to the Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN) to develop links with regional quality assurance agencies.

The ESOS Act 2000 does not have offshore jurisdiction.

**Where Australian universities set up campuses in other countries (e.g. Malaysia), does this have the effect of directing/driving international students to those campuses instead of coming to Australia?**

International students go to an offshore campus of an Australian university for many reasons. For instance, with Monash's Malaysian campus, this could be due to the fact that students can get the same quality education, obtain the same degree (as the Australian campuses) but are closer to their home country or are attracted by religious preference (e.g. female students from Middle East) and indeed cheaper fees and living costs.

The other side of the spectrum is that offshore campuses and programs also have a positive effect in terms of students coming to Australia, as a result of raising brand awareness for the higher education sector in a particular region or through the creation of accredited pathways that can meet a segment demand. Students who may have intended to come to Australia but then choose a local transnational option normally do so due to financial reasons (e.g. a high Australian dollar). With a persistently high Australian dollar, transnational education is one way of competing with offshore competitors.