

TAFE Directors Australia – Research Agenda (International)

Introduction

TAFE Directors Australia represents the interests of 59 member institutes from TAFE, technology institutes and dual sector universities. International engagement is a key platform of Australian TAFE institutes in their development of skilled workers for a global economy.

Our members are actively engaged in an international platform that is built on:

- Inbound students
- Transnational programs
- Offshore industry development
- Systems consultancy (including aid and development)
- Exchange and mobility

Our Interest in Research

The purpose of a TDA International Research Agenda is:

1. to demonstrate our commitment to better understand the international market place and to ensure that policy and program development is based on evidence and world class research;
2. to articulate to other partners (including members, government agencies and research bodies) our priority interest areas;
3. to identify possible leverage points and joint research priorities for collaboration and cooperation.

What are the current themes/issues in international VET and the questions we need answered?

Graduate outcomes- How well do international students perform in the VET sector? Where are our graduates and how are they contributing to their own economy or Australian economy? How do VET pathway students perform in higher education? What are industry's views on international VET graduates?

Student choices in VET – What are the key success factors in attracting international students to the VET sector? What are the different considerations for those students who seek to study in stay, study and study, study and go?

Outbound Mobility – Barriers and opportunities in mobility for the VET sector? Is industry willing to embrace mobility? Opportunities for industry focused programs (ie hospitality, fashion etc)? For existing programs – where are students going, what are they doing?

Recruitment and Agent Performance - How do we manage and support agents? What is the sector's reliance on the agent market? How well are we doing in student recruitment (benchmarking international operations)? How are our students getting their information?

Government Policy - Impact of MODL on student choices? Trades recognition process –

can we do it better? What are our competitors doing? What impact do inconsistencies in CRICOS implementation across states this have on enrolments and programming ?

New Global delivery models – Is there a broader market for offshore pre-migration assessment? Uncovering best practice in international industry partnerships? How do we build on VET TNE good practice? To what extent is the limited recognition and portability of *Australian VET qualification an issue?*

TAFE/VET as an international brand – how does the source country' view/perception of VET impact demand? What are the differences in status across markets? What are the market specific preferences for public versus private delivery? VETs place in the Study In Australia brand

Sustaining growth – Where are the new markets? How to remain active in mature markets? How to diversify markets? What skills sets are needed in our international teams?

Student support and integration – Where is the best practice? What are the real issues? What are some solutions that are working well? Stakeholder engagement – who else needs to be involved? Do we need a sector wide training program for all students on safety?

Managing capability and capacity – what is the right mix for the VET sector? How do we continue to build capability? DO we need a national bidding agency to secure large scale tenders? Do we need new models of cooperation to secure international projects?

Status of vocational education- what messages are important in “selling” VET, what are our competitors doing? How is the VET sector perceived across specific markets?

Options for Research Collaboration

TAFE Directors Australia acts in the interests of its members and may commission research in areas where there is high demand and funding. Since 2004 member institutes have been participating in the TAFE International Operations Benchmarking study (led by Strategy and Policy in Education Research (SPRE) which benchmarks their performance against other institutes and also the university sector in the cost of running an international office. This project is funded through member contributions to the project.

Most commonly TDA will act as a research partner or manager with funding agencies and research bodies who have an interest in our member's views and in our research capability.

TDA's growing research capability in the international area has been demonstrated through three key projects in 2008. TDA was commissioned by Department Education Employment and Workplace Relations to conduct research and industry consultation regarding marketing Australian VET internationally, assessing the needs of the public and private VET sector in international business skills, and in innovation in TAFE as part of the OECD Thematic Review of VET.

For more information about working with TDA and its members to advance this research agenda contact:

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