AN EXPLORATION OF THE LONG TERM EFFECTS OF STUDENT EXCHANGE EXPERIENCES

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INTRODUCTION
For some time now Australian universities have been endeavouring to encourage more students to go overseas on exchange for a period of their study, an opportunity which is becoming increasingly relevant to the fast-growing need for graduates to become globally competent. Although some evaluation has been conducted on the value of the exchange experience shortly after the students’ return from their program abroad, no known research has been carried out to explore the longer term effects of these programs on Australian participants.

Aim
The present study sought to discover the long term effects of a period of study overseas by surveying former students 10 to 15 years after their exchange experience. The aim was to gauge how these former students now perceive the effects of this experience on their subsequent academic choices, their career development, and their social and personal growth.

Purpose and reasons
Student mobility is being promoted more and more widely by universities and with increasing government support to encourage and enable students to gain international study experience. Many universities are examining and revising their graduate attributes together with strategies to ensure they are developed as an integral part of the student experience. This study focuses on the exchange experience and has sought to relate it to the overall aim of universities to turn out widely educated and well-rounded individuals who are able to become effective global citizens. Such global citizens need to be interculturally competent and Deardoff and Hunter (2006) identified that ‘attitudes of openness, respect (valuing all cultures), curiosity and discovery … are fundamental to intercultural competence’. Moreover, they found that one element was essential: ‘the understanding of others’ world views’. This research is underpinned by many earlier studies on the development of intercultural sensitivity and awareness requiring certain personal characteristics as well as the recognition of one’s own cultural norms and ethnocentrism (Hawes and Kealey, 1981; Furnham and Bochner, 1986; Hannigan 1990; Barna 1994; Kelley and Meyers, 1995, and many others).

There is much anecdotal evidence to support the notion that students become more globally and interculturally competent through a period of overseas study, but research on this is relatively scarce.

Other research and links
In 2002 a major study was completed in the US by Mary Dwyer of the Institute for the International Education of Students (IES) in which 3,723 former study abroad students from the previous 50 years were surveyed. This study stands as a landmark in measuring the longitudinal effects of study abroad on academic, career, intercultural and personal development. It was found that ‘study abroad has a significant impact on students in the areas of continued language use, academic attainment measures, intercultural and personal development, and career choices’ (Dwyer, 2004, p.161).

The study by Mary Dwyer provided the spark to undertake this study with former University of Melbourne students, using the IES survey instrument, with some variations to allow for local differences. The Melbourne results further validate the positive long-term effects of a significant period of studying abroad in another cultural and educational environment.
US context
The US has a long tradition of involving tertiary students in study abroad experiences, with almost 200,000 students participating in such programs in 2004/5 (IIE Open Doors, 2005). There is enormous impetus in US institutions to encourage study abroad and this has assumed greater importance since the impact of September 11, 2001. The recommendations of the Lincoln Commission have recently been introduced to the US Congress as a Senate Bill and, if enacted, would provide substantial increased funding to meet an annual target of one million students’ participating in study abroad within the next decade.

The experience of time spent abroad in a study situation is widely seen by educators as extremely desirable to ensure that the future leaders and influencers in US society have a far greater knowledge of other cultures and are more globally competent than at present. Increased spending and development in foreign language learning is also seen as essential in this strategy of making Americans more globally aware and interculturally competent. Influential Americans have made a number of strong comments on the importance of intercultural and global competence. A recent article in the International Educator by US Senator Richard J Durbin stated: ‘Our national security, international economic competitiveness, and diplomatic efforts in working towards a peaceful society rest on our global competence and ability to appreciate languages and cultures throughout the world’ (Durbin, 2006, p.5). The noted Harvard leader, Derek Bok, has declared that ‘Undergraduates cannot possibly amass all the information they would need to know about even the most important foreign cultures with which they might come in contact … as a result …(institutions) must be chiefly concerned with teaching students to think interculturally..’ (Bok, 2006, p.249)

The awareness that graduates are now competing for employment on a world stage is also part of the need for greater global awareness and competence in broader educational, cultural and social spheres.

Australian context
In Australia exchange students are those who pay tuition fees at their home institution and who study overseas as part of a bilateral agreement between institutions. Such agreements have become more commonplace in Australia in recent years, but the numbers of students going overseas for study purposes are still very low as a percentage of the total student population.

Recently there has been a far greater focus on the desirability of increasing Australian student mobility and this has been recognised by government statements with further government funding to assist students wishing to study overseas. The current government policy states: ‘Expanding Australian students’ experiences of the social, economic and political systems of other countries is crucial in building Australia’s capacity to engage in the international market and establish relationships with people and organisations in other countries. Such skills are invaluable in terms of Australia’s trade, foreign relations and security interests’ (DEST, 2004). On a number of occasions the current Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Honourable Julie Bishop, has also publicly supported the importance of encouraging students to go abroad (Lane, 2006, p. 21).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
In May 2006 questionnaires were mailed to all 818 students from the University of Melbourne who went on an overseas exchange between 1990 and 2000. The initial questionnaire was sent to the home addresses provided at the time of their university studies. Only 100 of the 818 had subsequently updated their addresses on the University’s alumni database. Not surprisingly, some 72 surveys were returned to the sender as the addressees were unknown. It is probable that many more never reached their addressees but others were obviously forwarded by family to the addressee who now lives elsewhere, often overseas.
In July a reminder was sent to the 630 who had not responded. This letter included the option (not available earlier) of completing an anonymous on-line survey. This option was only taken up by 26 respondents but hard copy replies continued to trickle in over the next two months. Indeed 10 have arrived too late to be included in the data used here. The survey contained no identifying data to ensure anonymity. However, a numbering system on envelopes allowed for tracking of replies received. A total of 233 completed surveys have been used to compile the data in this study which comprises 28% of the original 818. Given the difficulty of reaching the target group by using addresses from 10 to 15 years previously, this number is considered to be satisfactory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Respondents
There were 138 female (59%) and 95 male (41%) respondents which closely reflected the female to male ratio of exchange students in that decade. 132 were aged 25 to 29, 87 were aged 30 to 34, and 14 were over 35. These figures also reflect the increasing numbers of students having gone abroad over the 1990’s, with 197 of the 233 respondents having studied abroad between 1996 and 2001. Between 1991 and 1995 less than 20 students per year studied abroad from the University of Melbourne but numbers increased sharply in 1996 and beyond.
Most respondents studied abroad during their undergraduate degree with only 27 engaged in postgraduate study.

Length of study
A majority of 127 (54%) studied for a semester while 83 (36%) spent 2 semesters abroad. Others studied for varying shorter periods of time.

Destinations
Almost two-thirds, 147 (63%), studied in the English-speaking destinations of USA, Canada, UK, Ireland and South Africa. Forty-one (18%) went to Europe and 43 (19%) to Asia and other places. Of the non-English speaking destinations, Japan received the highest number of students with 22 (9%).

Accommodation
Only 5 students stayed in homestay accommodation; the majority of 153 (66%) lived in university accommodation and 77 (33%) had private rental accommodation. Approximately a quarter of respondents lived with local students, almost half lived with both local and international students, while 16% lived only with other international students and 5% lived with other Australian students.

Continued Contact
The majority of respondents, 181, (78%) indicated they are still in contact with people they met during their time studying overseas. Of these, 122 were local host country nationals, 111 were other international students, and 82 were other Australian students. This is a much higher percentage than reported by the US students with IES and may indicate a greater level of integration in the host universities by virtue of being exchange programs (as distinct from some IES programs which do not include integration in host country programs).

Repeat visits to host country
Sixty-seven respondents (29%) had visited their host country once since their exchange, while 87 (37%) had returned on at least two or more occasions (one had been 15 times). Five now live in their former host country, and several have spent some time living there in the intervening years. However, the remaining 67 (29%) have not returned to their host country again.
Subsequent international travel
The vast majority of respondents, a total of 218 (94%), have undertaken further international travel since their period of study abroad. Their reasons for travel included 26% who indicated study, almost 60% work, 86% holidays and 27% family reasons.

Previous travel
Interestingly, a large percentage of respondents (198 or 85%) indicated that they had also travelled overseas before their study abroad. Moreover, 166 or 71% had been out of Australia more than once, while of these 61 (26% of the total) had been more than 5 times and almost 11% had been more than 10 times.

Influence on university chosen
For most respondents (91%) the desire to study overseas had no influence on their choice of university, unlike the US experience shown in the IES study where the opportunity to study abroad was a major factor in their choice of university.

Language Study
Approximately a third of respondents, 74 (32%), studied another language while they were abroad. Of these, 54 (23%) said they still regularly use that language. A quarter of respondents (59 or 25%) said that their overseas classes were conducted in another language, with the most common languages being Japanese and French, followed by German and Swedish.

Specific influence of study overseas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of influence</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed a more sophisticated way of looking at the world</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met host country friends with whom I maintain contact</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sparked an interest in travel</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced me to explore other cultures</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced me to get a job overseas</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opened up an interest/passion for another language and/or culture</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changed my career plans</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established relationships that became professional contacts</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced me to work for multinational organization in Australia</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met my spouse of life partner there</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Specific influence of study overseas – number and percentage of respondents who replied positively to each area of influence.

The above table shows that more than half the respondents have remained in contact with host country friends met during their exchange, and were influenced to travel more and explore other cultures. The greatest agreement was by 81% who felt that they had been influenced to develop a more sophisticated way of looking at the world.

Worked in international capacity
Since their study abroad a total of 81 or 35% of respondents have worked in an international capacity in private industry while many others have done so with other types of organizations, although it is unclear what percentage of the total have worked internationally as some may have worked in more than one area.
Table 2: Number of respondents who have worked or volunteered in an international capacity since university.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of work</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In private industry</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For a non-profit agency or organization</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a volunteer for a non-profit agency</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a teacher or educator</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a consultant</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For government</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For any other government</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Funding

Just over 83% or 194 respondents received some kind of funding to assist with their study overseas and 100 of these said they would not have been able to study abroad without this funding.

Academic Choices

My overseas study experience influenced my later academic choices in the following ways:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged an interest in lifelong learning.</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced my interest in academic study.</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made me interested in going on to postgraduate study.</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced my subsequent subject selection or major.</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Led to an enhanced interest in foreign language study.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Responses to the influence of study abroad on later academic choices
(Note: In Tables 3 – 6 the Likert scales have been simplified by combining Strongly agree and Agree responses into one grouping, and Strongly disagree with Disagree responses into another grouping).

The strongest influence of the study abroad experience on later academic choices related to an enhanced interest in academic study and encouragement of an interest in lifelong learning with 70% or more of respondents agreeing with these statements. More than half (57%) also indicated that the overseas study experience made them more interested in progressing on to postgraduate study. Fewer (43%) agreed that the experience had influenced their later choice of subject selection or major.

Career development

My study abroad experience influenced my career development in the following ways:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has enhanced my overall employability</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed me to acquire a skills set that influenced my career path.</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has contributed directly to my current or past employment</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignited an interest in a career direction that I pursued after the experience.</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided an introduction to, or enhanced my ability to speak a language other than English.</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided me an internship experience that shaped my career choices.</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: Responses to the influence of study abroad on career development

The strongest influence on career development came in the terms of enhancement of overall employability (83%) and the acquisition of a skills set that influenced career paths (73%). Respondents were divided over the effect of the study abroad experience on career direction with only half agreeing that it had affected them, while 45% said it had not had any effect on their career direction. Unlike US students (and in contrast with the IES results) most Australians pursue a professional degree at the undergraduate level and their career choice is usually made before commencing university study. Relatively few students (28%) felt that an internship aspect of their study abroad had influenced their career development and this is probably attributable to the low numbers of Australian students who complete an internship overseas. A majority of 61% of respondents said that their overseas experience contributed directly to their current or past employment, but a good third (34%) disagreed with this statement and a further 5% indicated it was not applicable.

Personal, social and intercultural development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My study abroad experience influenced my personal/social development in the following ways:</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enabled me to learn something new about myself.</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed me to value perspectives other than my own</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced my perspective on how I view the world.</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed me to better understand my own cultural values and biases.</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Served as a catalyst for increased maturity.</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced my interaction with people from different cultural backgrounds.</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced me to seek out a greater diversity of friends.</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has influenced my political and social awareness.</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabled me to tolerate ambiguity.</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caused me to change or redefine my political and social views.</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gave me a new or enhanced appreciation of the arts.</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced the choices I make in my family life</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced my participation in community organisations.</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Study abroad influence on personal/social development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My study abroad experience influenced my personal attributes in the following ways:</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased my independence</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced my self confidence</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased my openness to new ideas</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributed to increased creativity and problem solving skills</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced my leadership skills</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced my planning and time management skills</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Study abroad influence on personal attributes
Tables 5 and 6 show various aspects of influence that relate to personal and social development and which are also closely related to intercultural competence. These tables show that more than 90% of the respondents agreed that their overseas study experience allowed them to better value perspectives other than their own and to better understand their own cultural values and biases, enhanced their understanding of themselves, increased their maturity, independence and self confidence, and influenced their perspective on the world, while 73% felt that they were better enabled to tolerate ambiguity. According to the literature these are all components that are important to being interculturally competent.

In addition, more than 80% of respondents agreed that their experience abroad influenced them to seek out a greater diversity of friends, influenced their interaction with people from different cultural backgrounds, affected their political and social awareness, contributed to increased creativity and problem solving skills, and enhanced their leadership skills. These types of skill development intersect with both intercultural and global competence and are valuable in the personal sphere as well as social and work situations.

There was less agreement on the study experience having affected changes in their political or social views, appreciation for the arts, family life choices and time management skills, although a majority still agreed that these had been influenced to some extent. The only area which the majority felt had not been impacted was their participation in community organizations.

**Most beneficial aspects**

Many of these personal development aspects were specifically mentioned in the open-ended question which asked the respondents about the most beneficial, long-term impact of their international study experience. After coding the wide range of answers it was clear that **personal and social development** in terms of increased independence, maturity and confidence figured largely with such benefits and similar ones being mentioned 119 times. Some of the comments included the following: 'best experience of my life', totally changed me', ‘realised my potential’, ‘fabulous life-changing experience', sense of achievement’.

The second most common response to this open-ended question mentioned **cultural learning** in a variety of forms with 91 respondents indicating that this was one of the most beneficial results of their international study experience. Comments included: ‘seeing life from a completely different perspective’, ‘a much bigger world…and confidence to get into it’, ‘tolerance for the people’, made me realise how much I love Australia and the things we take for granted’, ‘cultural differences between English-speaking countries’, ability to live and function in another language’.

The third highest category of responses concerned **relationships** – wider and valued friendships, increased value of family connections either overseas or at home, meeting of new loves, life partners, etc. **Career enhancement** was mentioned by 45 respondents, **expansion of new horizons** by 39, and the **academic experience** by 31.

**Least satisfactory aspects**

In response to the open-ended question about the least satisfactory aspects of the overseas study experience 88 respondents answered that there were ‘none’ or that the time was ‘not long enough’. Where a negative aspect was referred to, it was generally qualified by indications that the overall experience had surpassed any minor issues. **Lack of support at the host institution, feelings of personal or cultural isolation, and re-entry problems** were the most common negative issues and each was mentioned by approximately 30 respondents. Re-entry problems included difficulties settling back into life in Australia, feeling estranged from old friends, re-entering the home/family environment after the freedom of time overseas. Twenty-four respondents said that financial problems were a major issue for them and although most also said they would not have forgone the experience, they felt it diminished their overall experience in various ways.

Eighteen respondents mentioned that their academic experience was not satisfactory – in some instances this was because the study overseas was of a lower quality or standard but
in a few instances it was the reverse. Some also indicated that there was a mismatch of course content that did not enhance their overall satisfaction.
A number of respondents felt that they were not well supported by their home institution, either the exchange office or their faculty. This manifested in various ways from poor pre-departure information through lack of assistance with subject matching to a lack of post-exchange recognition of subjects or the other less tangible learning and skills acquired.

Additional comments
The final open-ended question simply asked for other comments. In this section 47% of respondents made a very strongly positive statement about their study abroad experience and these included words and phrases such as ‘changed my life’, ‘a wonderful chance to explore one’s inner and outer world’, ‘I loved it!’, ‘looks fantastic on the resume’, ‘enhanced my understanding of Australia’s place in the world’, ‘made my life richer’. Almost 30% said unprompted that they would recommend the experience to others and some even suggested that it should be mandatory.
Other comments were quite varied with little in common. It is worth noting, however, that only 9 respondents of the total 230 made a negative comment about their overall experience in this open section.

CONCLUSIONS
Whether we consider the literature on intercultural competence, universities’ and governments’ desire to improve students’ global competence and graduate outcomes, or simply rely on the respondents’ own positive comments and reflections, it is clear that a period of study in another country and culture has brought benefits to the majority of these past students of the University of Melbourne. It can be safely said that in the experience of most of the respondents any negatives were well outweighed by the positives. Moreover, it is with the hindsight of several years in their careers or in further study that they have attributed much of their important personal and social development to the experience of leaving their home environment and studying abroad. The study experience seems to stand out as a special international experience distinct from other forms of travel abroad in which so many of the respondents had also participated.
Specifically the major positive outcomes appear to be:
- increased personal development and intercultural competence;
- enhanced employability and skills for careers;
- high level of continued contact and international networking;
- enhanced interest in further study.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Specific
Although this study relies on a relatively small number of respondents from one university the following are some recommendations to increase the numbers of students participating in study exchanges and to improve the overall experience that have arisen specifically from this data:
- Highlight the many positive outcomes of the exchange experience and this unique form of overseas travel to both students and staff. In particular acknowledge (1) the personal attributes developed, such as self confidence, independence, maturity, creativity and problem-solving and leadership skills; (2) intercultural and global competence, including understanding one’s own and other cultural values, knowledge of self and perspective on the world; (3) enhanced employability; and (4) international networks.
• Make more use of the positive experiences of returned students to encourage others, and, in particular, document some of the outcomes for older alumni who can demonstrate the long-term benefits of their experiences.
• Explore ways that the most valuable outcomes could be assured for even more students.
• Explore ways to ensure that the experiences which students have gained are valued and utilised on their return.
• Specifically encourage and support students who have not previously travelled overseas.

General
In addition the following are more general recommendations to increase student mobility that have been discussed by many who work in this area and which are supported by the findings of this study:
• Provide more financial support and incentives to students going abroad.
• Ensure better support at both home and host institutions, before, during and after the study abroad experience.
• Smooth the credit transfer issues between institutions.
• Encourage more males to participate.
• Encourage exchange to non-English speaking countries as well as English-speaking destinations.

FURTHER RESEARCH
This study has surveyed only students from the University of Melbourne who studied abroad in the 1990's. Other longitudinal studies and more recent research on the effects of such experiences need to be conducted in Australia on a wider scale. More detailed analysis could also be undertaken to consider the effects of different types of experiences, such as comparing study in English-speaking countries with non-English speaking destinations. As the majority of respondents in this study had positive experiences the emphasis has been on them, but a detailed analysis of the less positive experiences and the reasons for them would be very valuable.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
I wish to acknowledge Mary Dwyer and IES in allowing me to make use of the questionnaire developed for their own research on IES alumni.
I also wish to thank the past University of Melbourne students who responded to the survey.

REFERENCES


