

Information-seeking behaviour of international students

Online survey of over 6,699 international students studying in Australia

Study background

- Joint study between RMIT, The University of Melbourne and IDP Education
- Online survey of over 6,699 international students studying in Australia
- 2012 Universities Australia report – ‘Mapping the Social Networks of International Students: Foundations for Improving Communication’ (with IDP and City of Melbourne)
 - Significance of social networks in their study and lifestyle journeys in Australia
 - Significance of offline and online sources of information



Profile of respondents



Gender

51% Female

49% Male



Study Sector

38% Undergraduate degree

29% Postgrad by coursework

17% Postgrad by research

8% Vocational

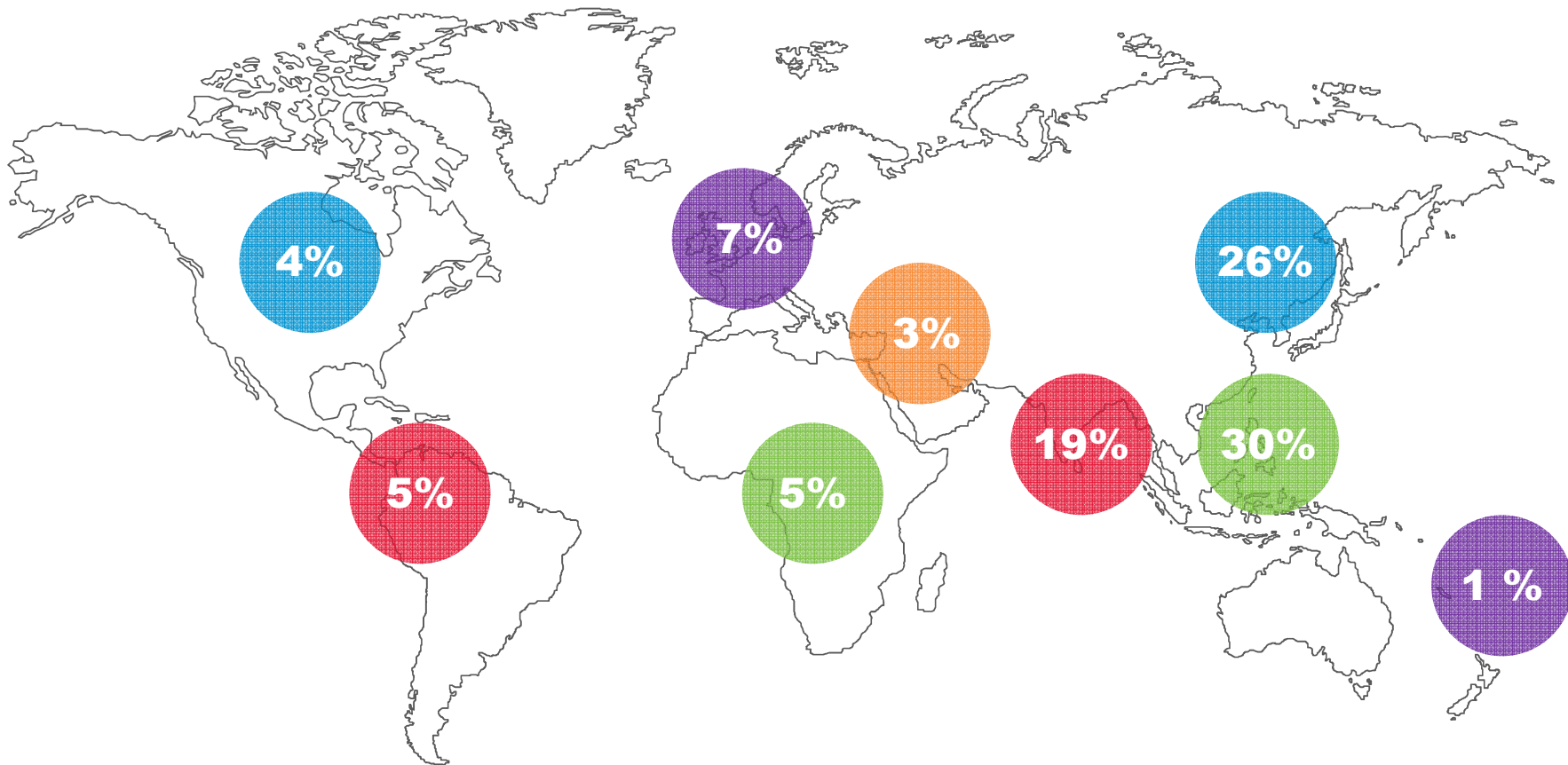
4% EL/Pathway program

2% Secondary school

1% Other diploma / certificate

Where are they from?

A broad spread of international students by citizenship



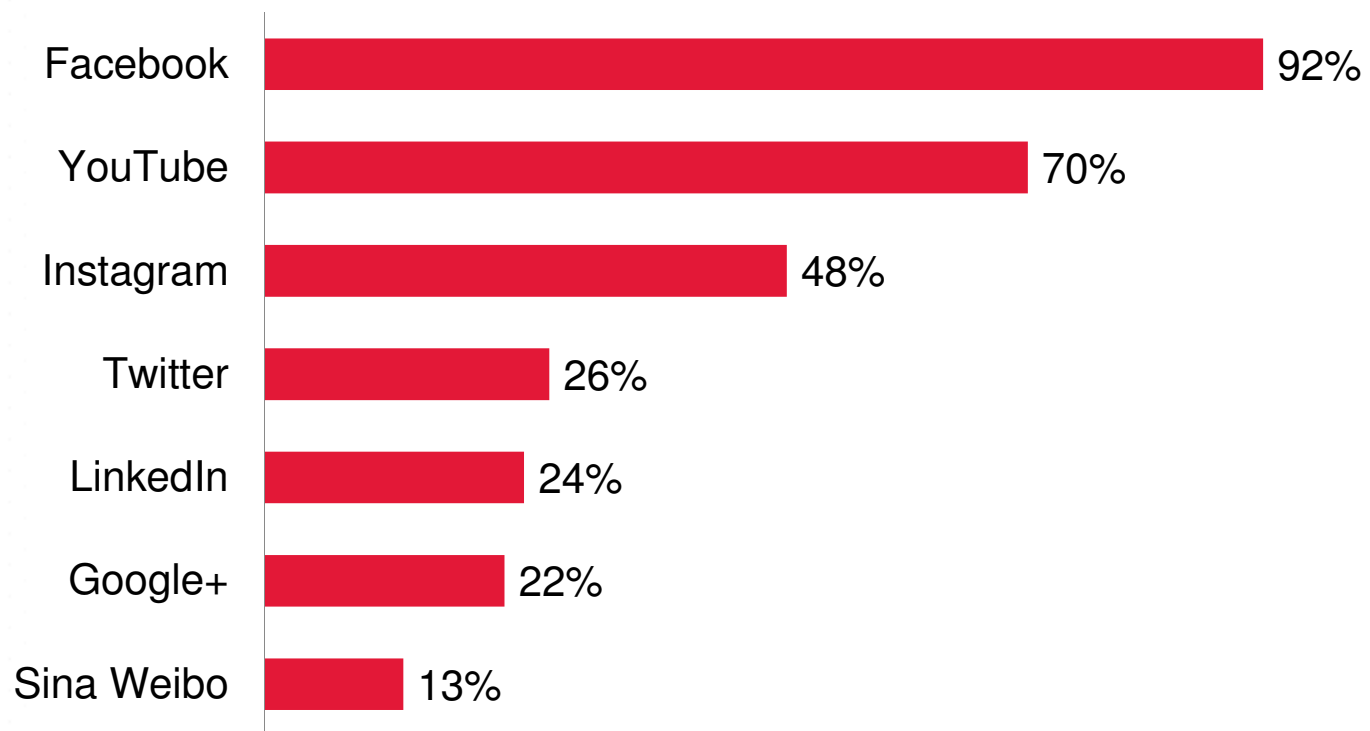
Assumptions

- Digital natives
- Social media savvy
- Always logged on
- Information at their finger tips

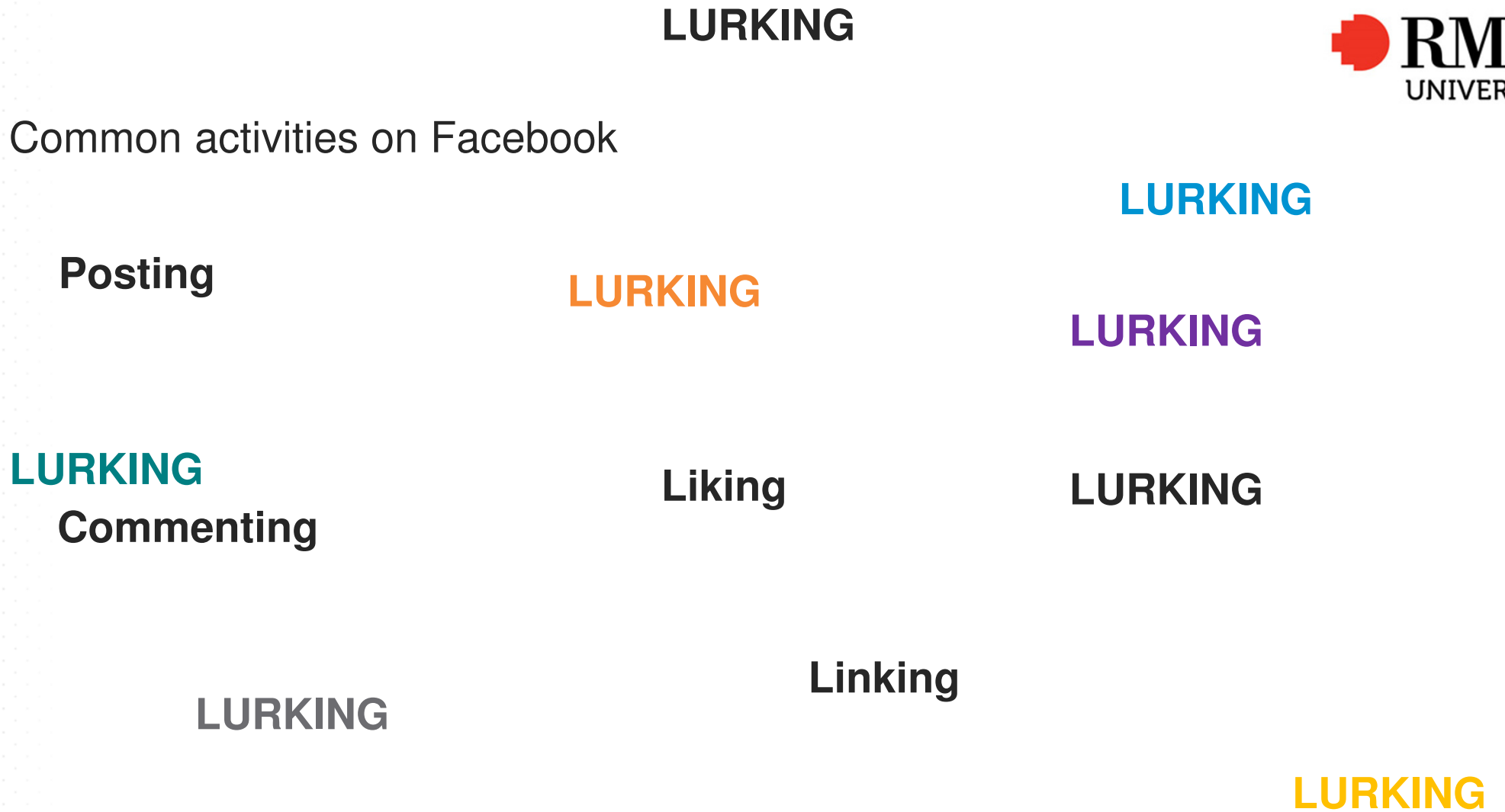


Social Media

So what are the popular social media platforms used?

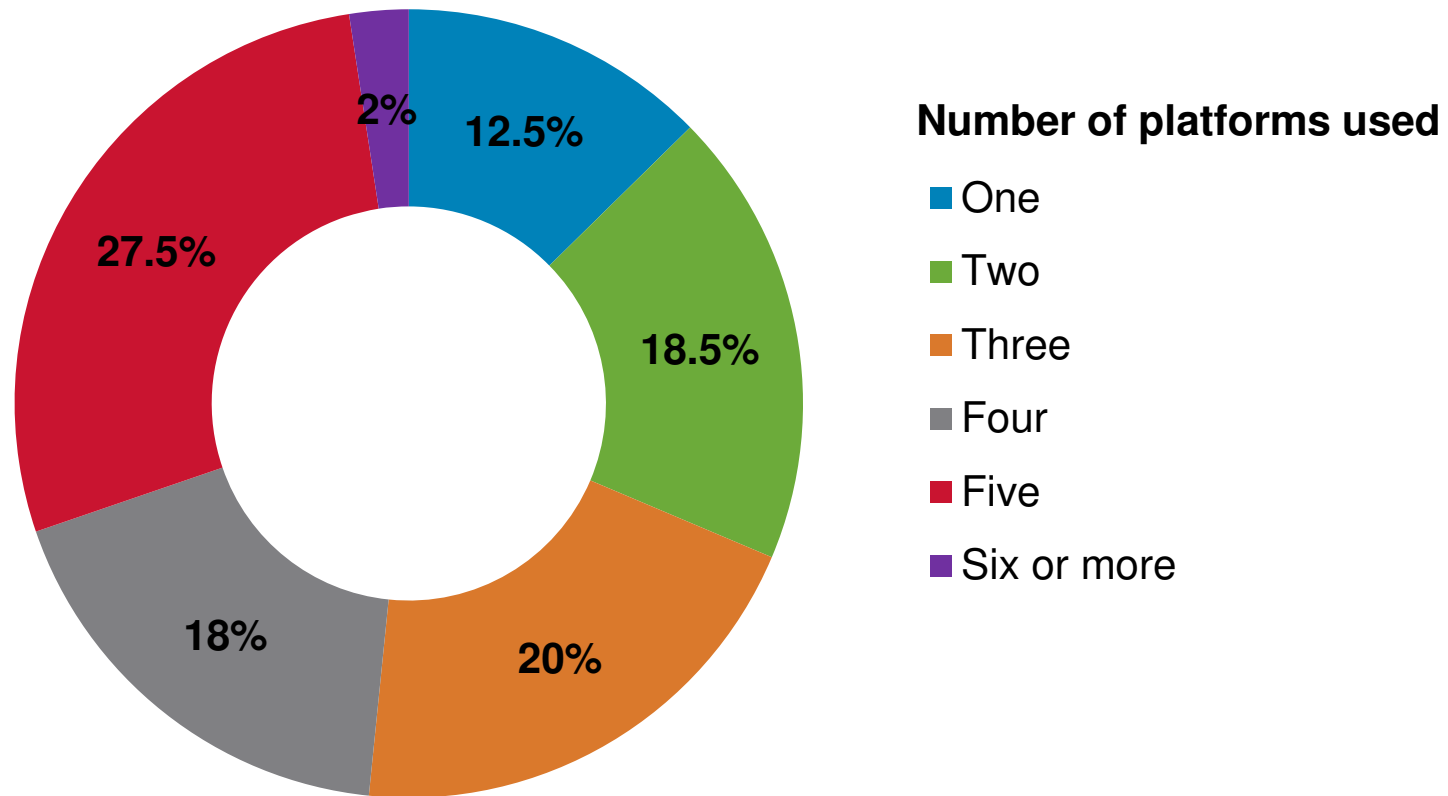


Common activities on Facebook



Social Media

But they are social media jugglers



Information sources

Other than the institutional webpage, where else did you get information on studying and living in Australia, before you arrived in Australia?



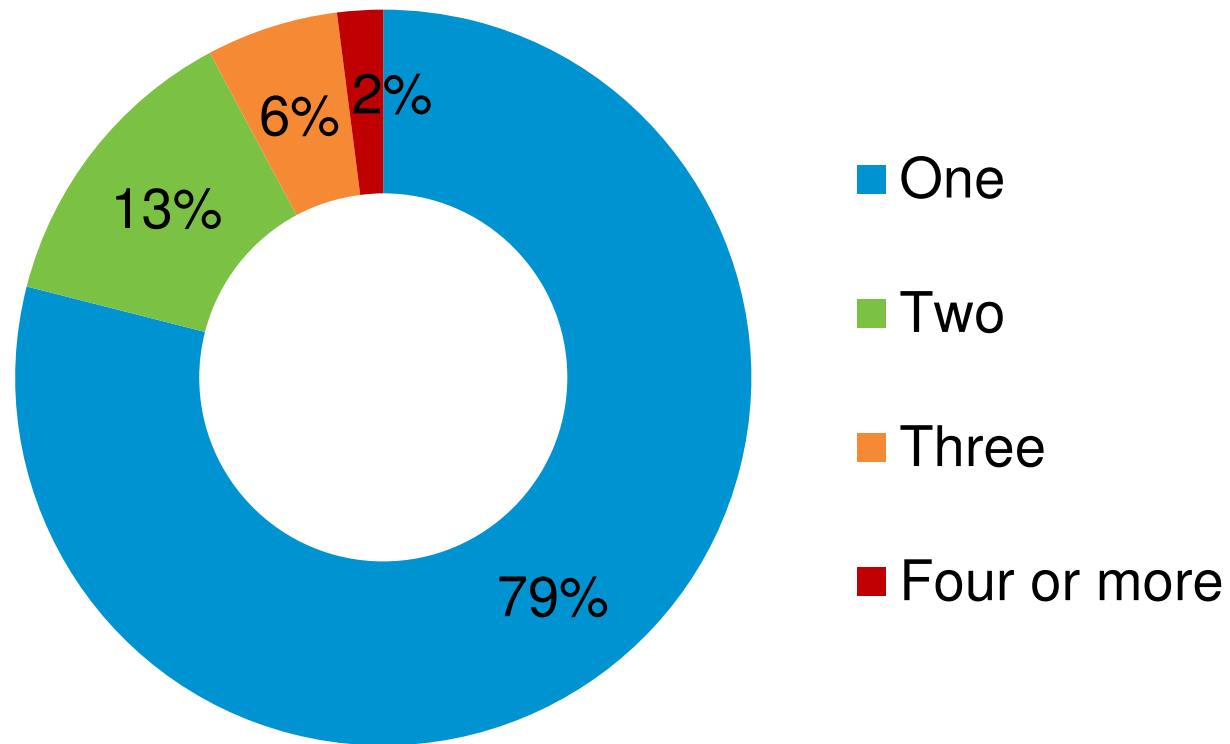
What do we see?



- **Half of the respondents are self-directed...**

Yet – single sources reign!

When self-directed and looking at institutional websites they look at a single site



What do we see?

The significance of friends and family

46%

Family or friends in living in Australia

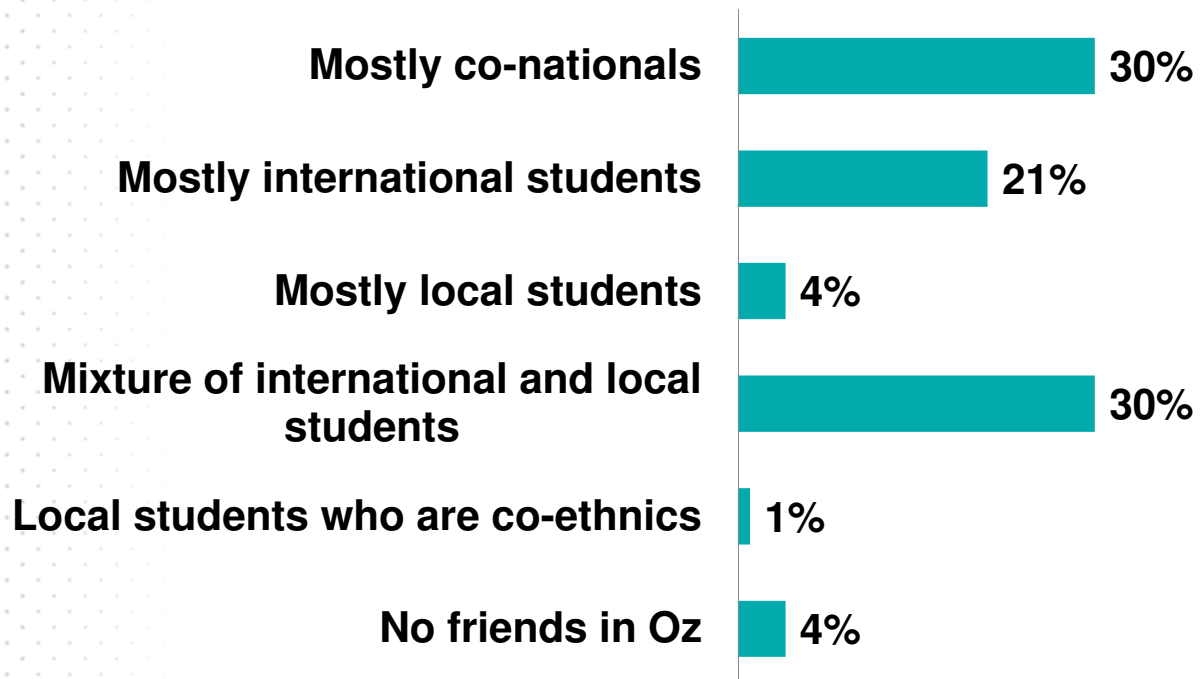
38%

Family, relatives, friends, in my home country



Friends

Relationship status: It's complicated



So...

- They may be social media savvy and digital natives with information at their finger tips
 - BUT they *only* look at one source.
- They also turn to friends and family in Australia and in the home nations for advice on their study journey.
- Friends – international experience matters. Family – info source who research on students' behalf.
- A blended communication approach is needed to start students on their Australian journey.