

# PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOLING EXPERIENCES FOR CHINESE STUDENTS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

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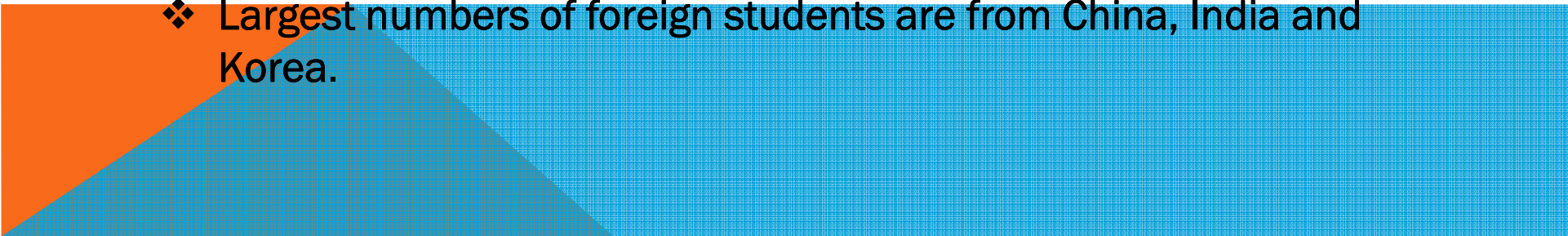
Government  
of South Australia

Department for Education  
and Child Development

# INTRODUCTION

- The purpose of the research
- ❖ Schooling experiences of Chinese secondary school international students in SA government schools.
- ❖ Meaning of international education from Chinese parents' perspectives.
- ❖ Enhance the study experiences of international students and to ensure sustainable development of the international education industry.
- ❖ Macro context of the mobility of students worldwide and the landscape of international education in Australia and SA.

## THE MACRO CONTEXT

- Student mobility worldwide as the key feature of international education
  - ❖ Number of students enrolled outside their country of citizenship has risen dramatically from 0.8 million in 1975 to 4.5 million in 2012.
  - ❖ Top 5 destinations for tertiary studies: the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Germany and France.
  - ❖ Largest numbers of foreign students are from China, India and Korea.
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## ➤ International education in Australia and SA

- ❖ Aus - Over 453,500 international students from 191 countries studying on a student visa in Australia in 2014.
- ❖ SA hosted more than 30,000 international students from about 125 countries.
- ❖ Younger age students going abroad have increased significantly.
- ❖ Aus - School sector ranked fifth by volume with 18,206 students recorded in 2014.
- ❖ US - The number of Chinese students at private schools increased over 100-fold from only 65 in 2005 to 6,275 students in 2010
- ❖ UK - nearly 26,000 international students studying at independent schools in 2011/12

❖ Chinese secondary school international students in South Australian government schools

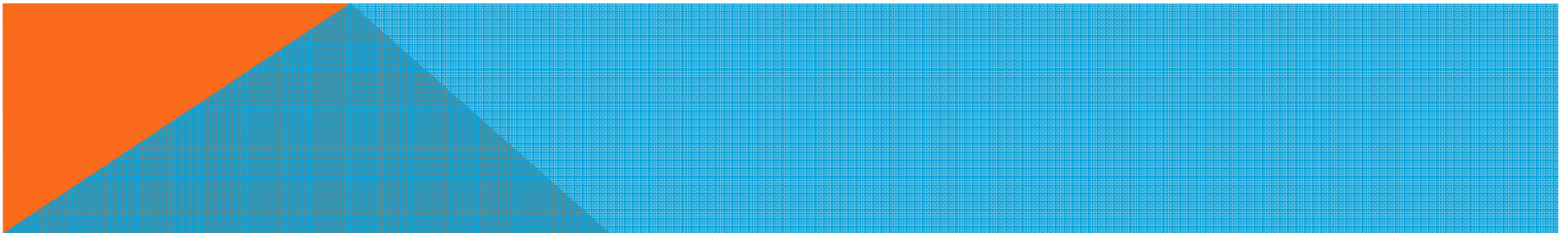
Nationality	State	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
China	ACT	290	273	251	243	277	333
	NSW	1716	1682	1647	1698	1820	2198
	NT	6	7	7	9	6	6
	QLD	485	433	414	315	271	285
	<b>SA</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>515</b>
	TAS	79	69	38	33	36	48
	VIC	1670	1582	1486	1512	1669	1977
	WA	293	306	264	226	214	170
Hong Kong	ACT	4	7	10	11	10	8
	NSW	42	41	40	46	51	51
	NT	1				1	1
	QLD	18	25	26	28	21	28
	<b>SA</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>44</b>
	TAS	10	5	2	5	10	14
	VIC	51	54	49	48	47	47
	WA	31	49	53	35	28	18

## ➤ Economic benefits

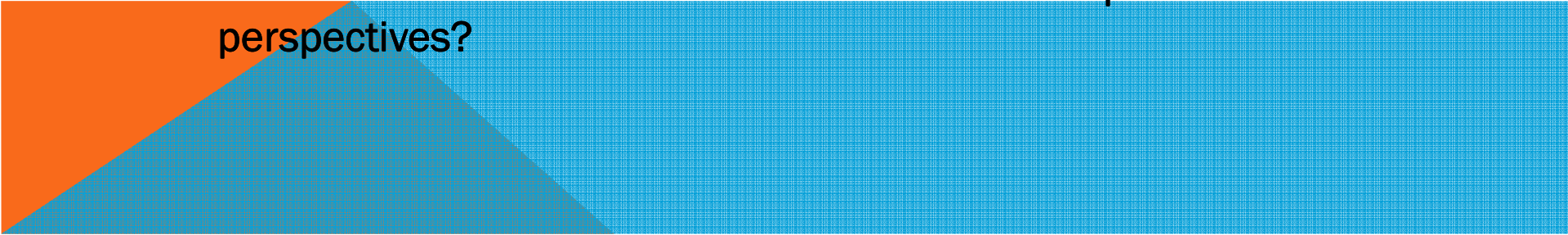
- ❖ US - 2012/2013 academic year: international students and their dependants contributed \$24 billion to US economy (NAFSA, 2012).
- ❖ UK – 2013 report released by UK Government : international education, in all its forms, was believed to be worth £17.5 billion to UK economy.
- ❖ Aus – 2014 revenue was \$17 billion. In SA, the revenue was over \$1 billion and international education was the largest service export for SA, and the sixth largest export overall.

## THE PROBLEM

- With rapid growth comes challenges.
- Understanding the students' experience in Australia and SA government schools has much significance for sustaining the international education program.



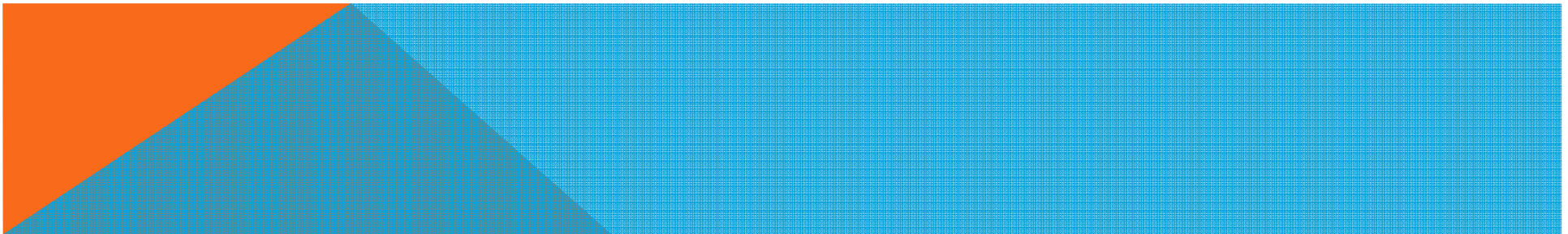
# THE QUESTIONS

- Motivations for decision to study overseas?
  - Influencing factors to choose Australia as the study destination and SA government schools as the provider?
  - Expectations about their school and their homestay?
  - Schooling and living experiences with SA government schools and homestay families?
  - How international education is understood from parents' perspectives?
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# THE METHODOLOGY

- Research methodology.
- Research participants.
- Data collection.



# FINDINGS – STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

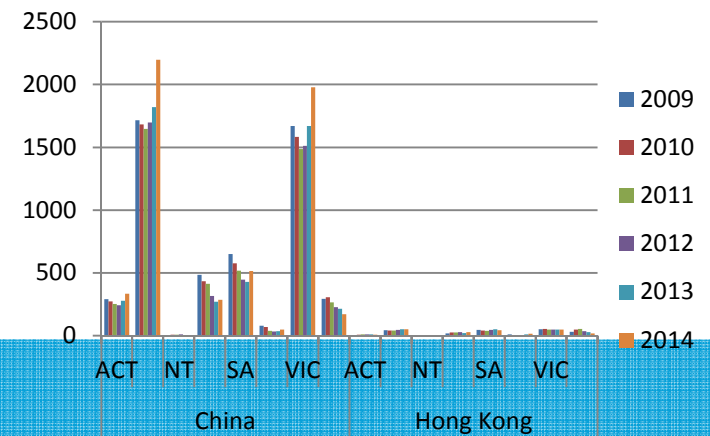
## ➤ Students' perceptions of the benefits of study overseas (Push and Pull factors)

- ❖ Avoid stress and pressure (75%)
- ❖ The western education system (75%)
- ❖ Competitiveness that being *haigui* can bring (67%)
- ❖ Broadening views and international perspectives (50%)
- ❖ Independent living skills (33%)
- ❖ Improve English (33%)
- ❖ Other perceived benefits (better study and living conditions, *guanxi* networks and possibility of migration)



➤ Main factors in choosing Australia as the study destination and SA government schools as the provider

- ❖ Agents and family friends' influence (100%)
- ❖ Attractive environment (50%)
- ❖ Cost of living (42%)
- ❖ Possibility of migration (33%)
- ❖ Smaller population/fewer Chinese (25%)
- ❖ Parents' support and influence (low level)



➤ **Expectations about study in SA government schools**

❖ **Teaching and learning conditions (83%)**

❖ **The services to be provided (75%)**

❖ **Better teaching quality (33%)**

Expectations about study in South Australian government schools



➤ Expectations about homestays

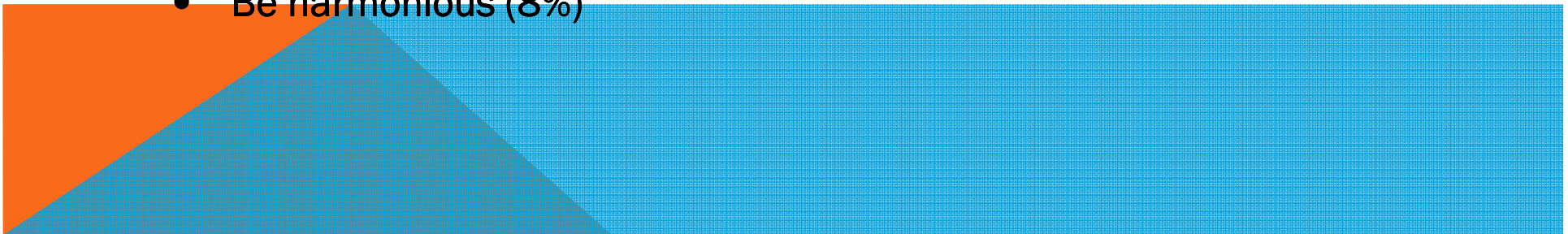
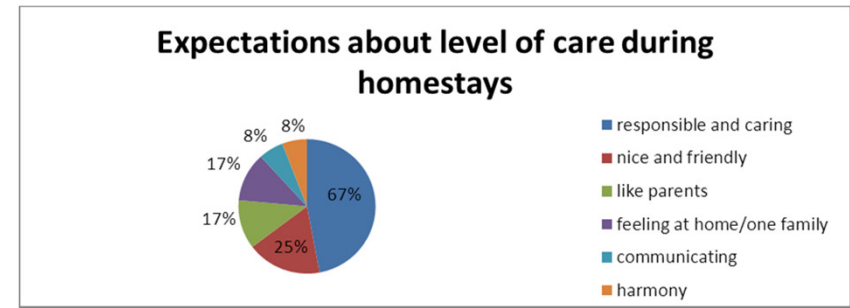
❖ Living conditions

- A much bigger house
- A beautiful garden
- Household electrical appliances
- Heating and cooling system
- A good economic situation



## ❖ Level of care during homestay

- Be responsible and caring (67%)
- Be nice and friendly (25%)
- Be like parents (17%)
- Make students feel at home/family member (17%)
- Communicate with students (8%)
- Be harmonious (8%)



# FINDINGS –STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

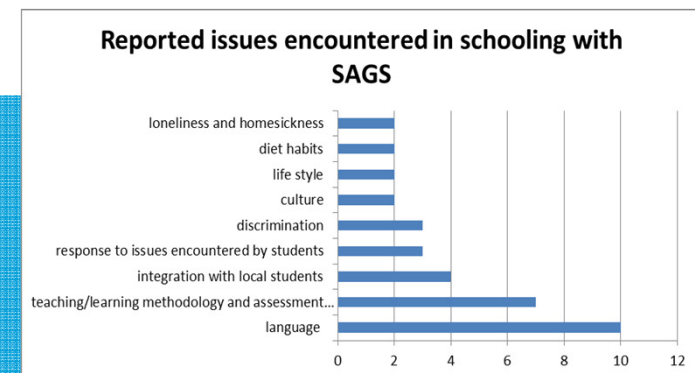
## ➤ Student perceptions of positive experiences in schools

- ❖ Improved English language proficiency (75%)
- ❖ Improved independent living skills (67%)
- ❖ A better education (67%)
- ❖ Broadening views and perspectives (50%)
- ❖ Better cultural understanding (33%)
- ❖ Enhanced communication skills (25%)
- ❖ Being able to access to support services (25%)
- ❖ Exposure to a better environment (25%)



## ➤ Student perceptions of negative experiences in schools

- ❖ Language barrier (83%)
- ❖ Problem with the course structure and teaching/learning methodology(58%)
- ❖ Cultural issues and integration with local students (33%)
- ❖ Discrimination (25%)
- ❖ Loneliness and homesickness (17%)
- ❖ Other reported issues

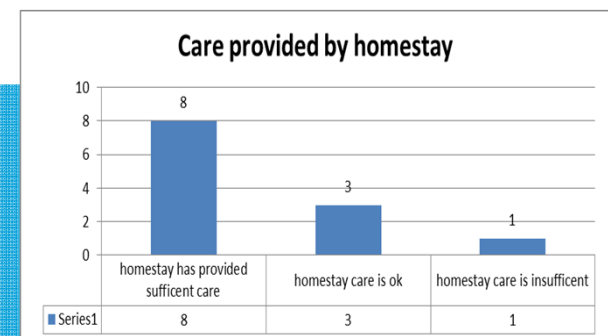




➤ Students' perceptions of their experience of homestays

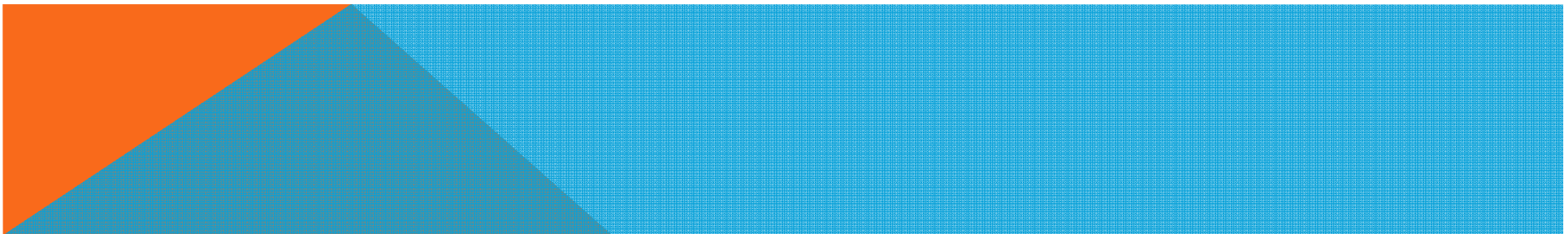
❖ Perceived benefits of staying with homestay

- Being treated like a family member and provided with sufficient care
- Support for initial settlement as well as language, cultural understanding, life style and study
- Being provided with satisfactory living conditions



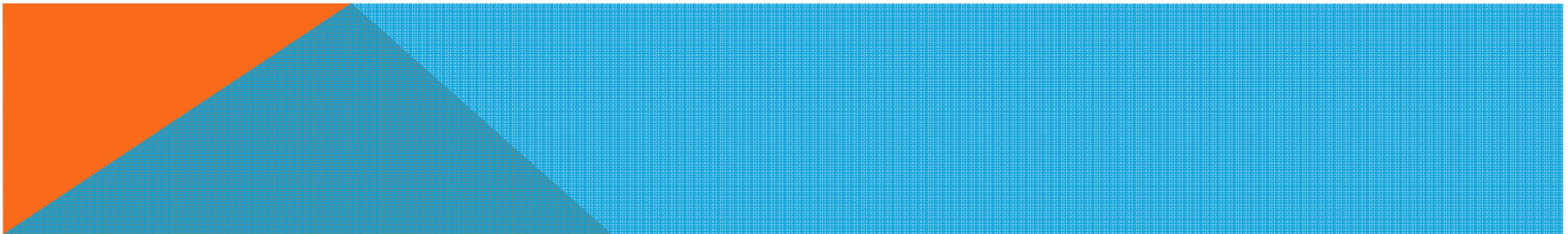
## ❖ Students' perceived negative experiences of homestays

- Lack of genuine concern on the part of the host family
- Problems with food
- Living conditions were not as good as expected
- The homestay is too far from the school
- The level of trust and respect shown to them

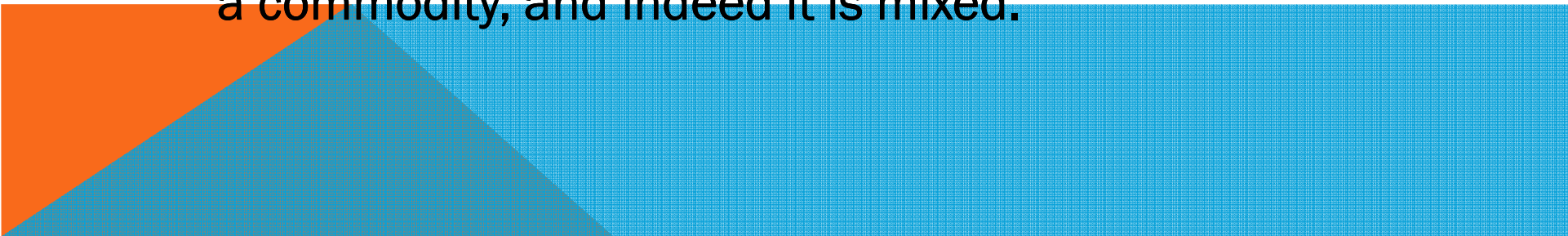


## FINDINGS – PARENT PERSPECTIVES

- International education means different things to different people.
- Parents tend to accept the idea that education as a commodity. They see commercialization as a problem when they think that the drive for profit limits the quality of the education or support that is offered.



## SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

- Chinese secondary school international students had significant expectations about their schooling in SA government schools and their homestays.
  - According to the data generated, their expectations about studying in SA government schools were mostly met.
  - International education can be both a public good and a commodity, and indeed it is mixed.
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## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Schools and the state education department need to play an even more important role to enhance international students' study and homestay experiences in SA government schools.





**Government  
of South Australia**

Department for Education  
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# Questions?

## Thank you

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