Bridging the gap: Identifying the barriers to successful domestic and international students' relations

Presented by:
Saba Nabi, Former National Equity Officer, CISA
Dion Lee, National Postgraduate Officer, CISA | postgraduate@cisa.edu.au

Supported by:
CISA
Council of International Students Australia

TOEFL®
Who are we?

The Council of International Students Australia (CISA) is the national peak student representative body for all international students studying at the postgraduate, undergraduate, private college, TAFE, ELICOS and foundation level in Australia.
What do we do?

Our main purpose is to:

- Advocate for the interests and needs of international students
- Advocate for high quality education for international students
- Facilitate network building among stakeholders with an interest in supporting international students.
- CISA works with State and Federal Ministry, various Stakeholders and Educational bodies
- Consultative Committees; Council for International Education, ESOS Act, EVCC & more
- Host an annual national conference for International Students, Government and the International Education Industry
- Provide means of consulting and engaging with the international students
- Host international student roundtable events in partnership with various government & non-government organisations
- Promote cross-cultural awareness and interactions in Australia
- Advocate for equitable, non-racist, non-discriminatory law reforms and practices concerning international students
Survey Rationale

- Identify current communication gaps between domestic and international students
- Best practice initiatives: What fosters interaction within students?
- Promote awareness of CISA
- Identify gaps in current efforts to foster cohesiveness
Survey Period & Promotion

- July 2016 – October 2016
- Advertised through Facebook Ads, Direct Mailers to members, stakeholder cross-promotional
- Prizes and Advertising funded by ETS TOEFL
Survey Methodology

- There were some compulsory qualitative questions
- Some were open questions where students elaborated on the various activities and events currently existing at their campuses
- The survey was done via SurveyMonkey
1. Age Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 - 20</td>
<td>15.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 22</td>
<td>28.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 - 24</td>
<td>18.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 - 26</td>
<td>12.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 and above</td>
<td>25.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2. Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>54.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>44.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans male</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans female</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Australian State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
<td>8.71% 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>27.53% 158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td>1.39% 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>9.93% 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>5.40% 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>3.83% 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>41.64% 239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>1.57% 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 574

- Answered: 574
- Skipped: 73

Supported by:

- CISA (Council of International Students Australia)
- ETS TOEFL
4. Sector Representation

- University: 100%
- TAFE/VET: 10%
- Foundation studies: 0%

Supported by:

CISA
Council of International Students Australia

ETS TOEFL
5. How long have you been studying in Australia? (Select ”More than 2 years” if you are domestic)
6. Which year of study are you in?
7. Residency

- International student
- Domestic student
- I am not a student

Supported by:
- CISA
- ETS TOEFL
8. What type of personality are you?

- Introvert
- Extrovert
9. Rank the following issues affecting international students in order of priority

- Accommodation
- Transport concessions
- Employment opportunities
- Safety
- Social and cultural...
10. How easy do you think it is for international students to make friends with domestic students?

- Weighted Average: 3.29
11. How many international students do you know?

- 0
- 1-3
- 4-10
- More than 10
12. How many of your friends are international students?

- 0
- 1-3
- 4-10
- More than 10
13. Do you usually make the initial approach to befriend international students?

- Yes
- No
14. Rate the following on a scale of 1-10:
(1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest)

Level of interest in befriending international students

Frequency of interactions with international student friends

Strength of your friendships with international students
15. On average, how long do your friendships with international students last?
16. In which setting within your institution are you more likely to meet international students?
17. In which setting within your institution are you more likely to make friends with international students?

- Lectures
- Tutorials
- Contact sessions/practical sessions
- Social events organised by...
- Social events organised by...
- Other (please specify)

Supported by:

CISA
Council of International Students Australia

ETS TOEFL
18. If your institution does have programs to create opportunities for international and domestic students to meet and socialise, please rate their success on a scale of 1-10 (1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest)?

- Weighted Average: 6.47

Supported by:
Council of International Students Australia

ETS TOEFL
19. If your institution does have programs to create opportunities for international and domestic students to meet and socialise, how often do the programs run?
20. How many programs or events, per semester, does your student body/union/guild (incl. clubs & societies) organise to create an opportunity for international and domestic students to meet and socialise (excluding academic activities such as lectures, tutorials etc)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1-3</th>
<th>4-6</th>
<th>7-9</th>
<th>More than 10</th>
<th>I don't know of any such program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>3.85%</td>
<td>17.31%</td>
<td>17.31%</td>
<td>9.62%</td>
<td>21.15%</td>
<td>30.77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supported by:

CISA
Council of International Students Australia

ETS TOEFL
21. If your student body/union/guild (incl. clubs & societies) does have programs to create opportunities for international and domestic students to meet and socialise, please rate their success on a scale of 1-10 (1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest)

- Weighted Average: 6.50
22. Rate the following on a scale of 1-10 (1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest)

- Likelihood of meeting and befriending an international student on campus?
- The effort of your institution in facilitating interactions between domestic and international students
- The effort of student union/guild (incl. clubs and societies) in facilitating interactions between international & domestic students
- Your interest in making friends with international students
23. How easy is it for you to make friends with domestic students at your institution?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Easy</th>
<th>Easy</th>
<th>Slightly easy</th>
<th>Difficult</th>
<th>Very difficult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.77%</td>
<td>23.29%</td>
<td>30.56%</td>
<td>32.91%</td>
<td>7.48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
24. How many domestic students do you know?

- 0
- 1-3
- 4-10
- More than 10

Supported by:

CISA
Council of International Students Australia

Supported by:

ETS TOEFL
25. How many of your friends are domestic students?

- 0
- 1-3
- 4-10
- More than 10

Supported by:

CISA
Council of International Students Australia

Supported by:

ETS TOEFL
26. How many of your friends are international students?

- 0
- 1-3
- 4-10
- More than 10

Supported by:
27. When making friends with domestic students, who usually makes the initial approach?

- Me: 70%
- Domestic student: 30%

Supported by: CISA - Council of International Students Australia

Supported by: ETS TOEFL
28. Rate the following on a scale of 1-10 (1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest)

- Your level of interest in making friends with domestic students
- Frequency of interactions with your domestic student friends
- Strength of your friendships with domestic students
- Frequency of interactions with your international students’ friends
- Strength of your friendships with international students
29. On average, how long do your friendships with domestic students last?

- 0-3 months: 20%
- 3-6 months: 20%
- 6-9 months: 10%
- 9-12 months: 10%
- More than 12 months: 30%
30. On average, how long do your friendships with international students last?

- 0-3 months
- 3-6 months
- 6-9 months
- 9-12 months
- More than 12 months

Supported by:

ETS TOEFL
31. Have you ever confided in a domestic student?
32. Do you think domestic students are aware of the issues and problems faced by international students?

Supported by:

CISA
Council of International Students Australia

Supported by:

ETS TOEFL®
33. In which setting within your institution are you more likely to make friends with domestic students?
34. If your institution does have programs to create opportunities for international and domestic students to meet and socialise, please rate their success on a scale of 1-10 (1 being lowest and 10 being highest).

- Weighted Average: 5.55
35. Rate the following on a scale of 1-10
(1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest)

- Likelihood of meeting and befriending a domestic student on campus
- The effort of your institution in facilitating interactions between international & domestic students
- Rate the effort of your student body in facilitating interactions between international and domestic students
Recommendations

- Organic growth: Student-engineered vs. Institution directed
- Interaction within classroom: re-design of assessments
- Credit-based interaction design
- Stronger international student voice
- Global Outlook: Start from home
- Quality over quantity: student engagement
- Support beyond $$$
Next Steps

- Policy paper to be published and directed to government and education providers
- Pilot projects in select partner education providers
Questions & Comments