

3 tips for Australian and New Zealand universities from the QS International Student Survey

Description

We recently released the first volume of the 2021 QS International Student Survey APAC Edition: *The Road to Recovery in Australia and New Zealand*.

Incorporating insights from more than 30,000 prospective students interested in studying in Australia and New Zealand, [The Road to Recovery](#) is the first of four volumes in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) edition of the 2021 QS International Student Survey.

This edition focuses on how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the global perceptions of Australia and New Zealand as study destination countries, examining the types of student support that will be most important on the post-COVID-19 campus and how institutions can best deliver a high-level online learning experience for students who aren't able to attend campus.

This blog outlines some of the most critical insights for Australian and New Zealand educators from this volume of the ISS.

Promote the success that Australia and New Zealand have had in handling the COVID-19 pandemic

As the world begins its recovery from COVID-19 and future intakes of prospective students begin researching their preferred study destinations, one of the things they will be looking for is how well their prospective destination countries have handled the pandemic and maintained the safety of their residents throughout the crisis.

The QS *Coronavirus Student Survey* shows that 56% of prospective students had reconsidered where to study due to the way that different governments had managed the pandemic, reinforcing how important a perception of a well-managed COVID-19 response will be to attracting international students in the future.

On this count, both Australia and New Zealand have performed admirably, and this has not gone unnoticed by prospective students; 94% of those considering studying in New Zealand said that the country had performed *very well* or *fairly well* in handling COVID-19, while 87% of those considering Australia said the same thing.

Promoting these successes will serve as a potent drawcard for attracting international students to New Zealand and Australia when restrictions allow them to.

Provide and promote mental health services for students needing additional support

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the challenges that extended periods of social isolation can present to mental health. This was particularly prominent for international students, who found themselves not only physically disconnected from their local social support networks but a long way from their existing friends and family in their home country.

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While we hope that the 2021 academic year and beyond will provide much more opportunities for social interaction,Â universitiesÂ mustÂ establishÂ appropriate support services to assist those students who may encounter difficulties during their studies.Â

The ISS suggests a high demand for formalised, professional mental health resources â?? 54% said that universities should be providing counselling sessions for students, 50% expected access to a mental health advice service, 47% expected a 24-hour helpline for students and 40% expected universitiesÂ toÂ have the capacity to refer at-risk students to a health care professional.Â Â

These servicesÂ should beÂ proactively promoted toÂ studentsÂ so they are aware of what help is available and know how to access it.Â

Maintain engagement in online study by making it synchronous, interactive andÂ socialÂ

While we hope that international border restrictions will relax throughout 2021, allowing more international students to return to classrooms, for the time being many students will be studying online as their primary mode of instruction.Â

The ISS shows that when it comes to online study, one of the most important considerations is to keep the teaching interactive and provide many opportunities for students to engage with both the lecturer and with their fellow students.Â According to our analysis,Â 61% said they would expect an online lecture to include a chat facility to askÂ the lecturerÂ questions in real-time, 51% said they would expect to be able to take part in interactive exercises and 46% said that they would expect to be able toÂ beÂ split into smaller groups for discussionsÂ and activities with their fellow students.Â

Only 31% expected no pre-recorded content, and time zone differences may make this a challenge for students located outside of the country. There is a clear desire among most prospective students for their learning experience to include a high level of collaboration and interactivity, whether that happens inside the classroom or online.Â Â

To discover more recommendations and insights from the QS International Student Survey,Â [please download your free copy of the report now](#).Â Â Â