



▲ Home

Internationalization in Australia and Canada: Lessons for the Future

◀ Contents

By Kelly Shaw

Abstract

This paper examines the internationalization of postsecondary education in Australia and Canada. The author discusses the contextual similarities and differences between the two countries, the shifting rationale “from aid to trade” behind Australia’s internationalization attempts and some of the reasons for Australia’s success. Australia’s experiences offer Canada important lessons in the areas of immigration policies, quality assurance, student safety, support for international students, mobility opportunities for domestic students and internationalization of the curriculum at home. The author also discusses challenges that both countries will face as they attempt to maintain or enhance their internationalization efforts in the future.

In October 2011, Canada’s federal government established an Expert Advisory Panel on International Education. The Panel published its final report in August 2012, arguing that international education is beneficial for all of Canada’s diverse communities and offering a number of suggestions for Canada to strengthen its international education strategy (Advisory Panel, 2012). The Panel (2012) defines internationalization as “the process of bringing an international dimension into the teaching, research and service activities of Canadian institutions” (p. viii), a definition which is very similar to Knight’s (2006) proposition that internationalization is “the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose functions or delivery of postsecondary education” (p. 213). In the report, the panel compares the current state of Canada’s international education with that of other Western countries. One country that has been considered successful in terms of internationalization, and from whose experience Canada can learn, is Australia.

International education is Australia’s third largest export, contributing \$17 billion to the economy in 2010 (Clark, Trick & Van Loon, 2011). The contribution of international students to Canada’s economy in the same year was \$7.7 billion, certainly considerable but lower than in Australia (Advisory Panel, 2012). In 2007, nearly 20% of Australia’s university seats were occupied by international students, compared to 7% in Canada (Clark et al., 2011). In 2009, international students accounted for between 15% and 48% of the student population at individual public universities in Australia (Shah & Nair, 2011). Besides having more international students, the pace of growth in Australia has also been higher. Between 1999 and 2004, international student enrolment in Australian institutions grew by 95%. Global growth during the same period was 43% (Adams, Banks & Olsen, 2010). In contrast, the growth rate in Canada between 1990 and 2001 was second last among all of the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) countries, although it has improved in recent years (McHale, 2010). The revenue generated by international

students provides Australian institutions with an important source of funding. Approximately 15% of the revenue of Australian universities is made up of international student fees (Adams et al., 2010).

During my investigation of the literature surrounding internationalization in Australia and Canada, I encountered few direct comparisons between the two countries beyond the enrolment numbers included above. Instead, most of the research focuses on one country or the other. As a result, what began as a quest to compare internationalization between Australia and Canada instead evolved into an examination of the lessons that Canada can learn from Australia's efforts. In this paper I will discuss the contextual similarities and differences between Australia and Canada, the rationales behind Australia's internationalization attempts, some of the reasons for Australia's success, and lessons that Canada can learn in the areas of immigration policies, quality assurance, student safety and the need to move beyond viewing international students as a source of revenue.

Context

General Country Characteristics

Both Australia and Canada have colonial roots in the British Empire and are now members of the Commonwealth. Politically, they are parliamentary democracies made up of smaller territories – six states and two territories in Australia, and ten provinces and three territories in Canada (Young, 1992). Both countries have advanced industrial economies and use English as an official language. Immigration has also been important for the development of both countries (Miller, 1995). The OECD (2010) states that in 2007, the foreign-born population, defined as “all persons who have ever migrated from their country of birth to their current country of residence” (p. 22), accounted for 25.0% and 20.1% of the total population of Australia and Canada, respectively.

Postsecondary Education

In Australia and Canada, universities are predominantly publically funded, they focus on both teaching and research (Miller, 1995), and were established by separate legislation so they have a degree of autonomy (Young, 1992). In both countries, higher education expanded after World War II in order to accommodate returning veterans and the expansion continued with the establishment of new institutions in the 1960s and 1970s (Miller, 1995). The most important difference for the purposes of this paper is the level of government where authority over higher education resides. In Canada, education falls under the jurisdiction of the individual provinces. Under the Australian constitution, education is technically a state matter, but the national government has taken more responsibility for the university sector, in particular, since World War II (Young, 1992). Clark, Trick & Van Loon (2011) argue that the Australian government has “essentially completed the Commonwealth takeover from state governments of higher education in general and universities in particular” (p. 183). With this high level of centralization, it has been possible for Australia's national government to offer direction in internationalization and related quality assurance mechanisms. In Canada, however, a much more decentralized situation exists and, as Farquhar (2008) points out, provincial governments in Canada have not prioritized internationalization. The Advisory Panel (2012) recognizes the strength of a unified approach to internationalization,

arguing that “Canada can only reach its potential when the federal government, the provinces and territories, education associations and institutions align their respective strengths under the same umbrella: Canada” (p. vii).

From Aid to Trade

International education in Australia grew in the 1950s with the Colombo Plan for Cooperative Development in South and Southeast Asia. Under this plan, the national government provided sponsorship for some foreign students in Australia. By providing these students with education, Australia assisted in the development of targeted new nations (Rizvi, 2011). This began to shift in 1979 with the introduction of the Overseas Student Charge (OSC). Foreigners had to pay the OSC to study in Australia, but the charge did not cover the full cost of education. Therefore, international students were still partially subsidized by the government (Adams et al., 2010). In the mid-1980s, the debate over which approach to take regarding international education was presented through two major reports released by the Committee to Review the Australian Overseas Aid Program and the Committee of Review of Private Overseas Student Policy. Gordon Jackson of the Australian Overseas Aid Committee suggested that education should be treated as an export industry, but John Goldring of the Private Overseas Student Policy Committee disagreed, arguing that education should continue to be a form of international aid. The government agreed with Jackson and introduced the Overseas Student Policy in 1985, which did not limit the number of international students permitted to study in Australia provided that they paid the full cost of their education and did not reduce access for domestic students (Adams et al., 2010). Meiras (2004) suggests that the introduction of this policy marked the shift away from foreign assistance to market-based or financial rationales.

Rizvi (2011) explains that the debate between aid and trade occurred because of several historical conditions. In the mid-1980s, the Cold War was coming to an end and people began to question the effectiveness of education as a form of international assistance. The education of international students was viewed as a new form of colonialism that benefited the developed country more than the developing country, and many students never returned to their home country where their education was supposed to assist in development. Furthermore, universities could no longer financially support international students, and often the students who were choosing to study abroad came from elite families and could afford to pay tuition anyway. Rizvi (2011) argues that Australia was one of the first countries to recognize the financial benefits of international students, but is careful to explain that the government “did not entirely abandon the developmental aspirations of the Colombo Plan but supplemented it with the language of educational markets” (p. 695). Rizvi argues that the new Overseas Student Policy was not completely market-driven; it was also concerned with modernization, social and cultural development, and promoting international relations. Although Adams et al. do not state this as openly as Rizvi, they take time to describe the government’s increased investment in scholarships for the Asia Pacific Region, demonstrating the value that the government placed on developing relationships with other countries in the region. However, many other scholars associate this policy more exclusively with a shift to commercial motivations for recruiting

international students (Marginson & Considine, 2000; Altbach, 2012; Meiras, 2004). Furthermore, students began to recognize the financial benefits of international study, including a higher return on investment than education at home and the value of international credentials in the global labour market (Rizvi, 2011).

Rizvi (2011) suggests that Australia was one of the first countries to recognize the financial motivations of students and “became a global trend setter in developing policies and practices around this insight” (p. 698). Marginson & Considine (2000) agree that Australia was one of the first countries to adopt this commercial focus, but take their analysis one step further, suggesting that Australian universities were well primed for this perspective because they have tended to be more utilitarian than other members of the Anglo-American university tradition. For example, according to the authors, Australians seem to believe that knowledge is not an end in itself, pure research spending is justified on the basis that it will lead to applied science, and the humanities tend to be viewed as a purview of the wealthy. I question this explanation for a number of reasons. First, the authors focus on the rise of the “enterprise” university in Australia and its management, not internationalization specifically; international education is touched on only briefly in their book. The authors may have a unique insight into international education because they approach it from a different perspective, or they may be straining to fit internationalizations into their larger argument. Second, this idea is not put forth (or acknowledged) by any of the more detailed discussions of international education that I reviewed. Third, the examples that the authors provide to illustrate Australia’s utilitarianism do not seem unique to Australia. The aims of universities as they relate to knowledge acquisition, the value of the humanities and pure versus applied research have also been questioned in North America and Europe.

Regardless of the subtleties of Australia’s disposition toward commercial rationales, Australian institutions shifted to a revenue-raising framework following the introduction of the Overseas Student Policy. In 1987, international student enrolment was subject to quotas and most students were at least partially subsidized by the government. By 1998, the quotas had been removed, international student numbers had quadrupled, and most were paying full fees. Furthermore, one quarter of Australia’s international students were not actually studying in Australia. Instead, they were enrolled in distance studies, through partner universities collaborating with Australian institutions, or at offshore campuses (Marginson & Considine, 2000). Adams et al. (2010) explain that Australia has been investing in these transnational approaches since 1991, and by 2006-2007 spending by students in this category accounted for 3.2% of all international student spending.

Immigration

Immigration has fueled the development of both Australia and Canada. Australia has adopted strategies that link immigration and higher education in order to benefit both areas. Graduates of Australian postsecondary institutions receive preference for permanent resident status. Ziguras (2012) explains that skilled migration grew in importance for Australia in the 1990s. Skilled migrants were seen as beneficial for the economy because they had lower unemployment rates than their unskilled counterparts.

Between the mid-1990s and 2000, the percentage of immigrants who were skilled migrants increased from 29% to over 50%. Furthermore, studies showed that migrants who held Australian credentials integrated more easily into the job market. This is because their credentials were more easily recognized by local employers, the migrants were familiar with Australian culture and they had already established social networks during their study periods.

As a result, the Australian government began recruiting former international students as migrants in 1998 (Ziguras, 2012). Under the immigration points system, international graduates of Australian institutions were awarded extra points. Furthermore, in 2001 the government began to allow international students to submit their permanent resident applications while they were in Australia, whereas previously they had been required to return to their home country for a period of time. This change made the process of applying for permanent resident status quicker, easier and less expensive. By 2002, half of all skilled migration applications were submitted by international students and by 2004, one third of international students who obtained an Australian degree obtained permanent resident status as well. In general, the countries that provided more permanent residents also saw higher postsecondary education enrolment growth. Therefore, the immigration policy changes seemed to assist in Australia's international student recruitment efforts.

Although Canada is also dependent on immigration, the same links between immigration and higher education have not been so firmly established. McHale (2010) points out the irony of this situation, explaining: "In contrast to its position as a reluctant recruiter of foreign students, Canada has one of the world's most developed systems for recruiting immigrants based on their skills" (p. 184). Studies show that immigrants from countries whose education systems are not like Canada's make a more successful transition if they obtain their degree in Canada. Canadian degrees have more value in the domestic labour market than unfamiliar foreign degrees. Furthermore, immigrants who arrive in Canada at a younger age tend to do better because they have more Canadian experience and adapt to the culture more easily. Therefore, Canada could have higher quality immigrants if it recruited more international students, and making permanent resident status easier to obtain would attract higher quality international students (McHale, 2010). Based on the importance of immigration and Canada's position as a leader in skill-based immigration, McHale (2010) points out that it is very surprising that Canada has not placed a greater emphasis on international student recruitment.

Canada has not yet drawn strong links between immigration and higher education. Until July 2011, 120 points were required for an applicant to receive independent skilled migrant status in Australia (Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2013). By 2003, holders of Australian educational qualifications were awarded five extra points, with master degrees and doctorates earning ten and fifteen points, respectively. Furthermore, applicants who studied in particular regional areas were awarded an additional five bonus points (Ziguras, 2012). In contrast, McHale (2010) explains that a substantial amount of points are awarded for educational attainment in the Canadian immigration process, but that the education does not necessarily need to be completed in Canada. Five

points are available for two years of postsecondary study in Canada under the adaptability category rather than educational attainment.

The Advisory Panel (2012) recognizes the importance of immigration for Canada, explaining that there is a severe skilled labour shortage approaching because of the age of the workforce. Currently, immigration is the source of 75% of the growth of the Canadian workforce and will likely account for 100% of the growth by the end of the decade. International students could be a valuable source of skilled migrants so the panel proposes that there should be closer links between international student recruitment and Canadian immigration policies and that those links should be more actively promoted. McHale agrees, arguing that in order to maximize the benefits of international student enrollment, Canada must make permanent resident status easier to obtain by awarding more points for Canadian postsecondary education and allowing students to gain work experience while they study.

Lessons for Canada

Internationalization is a relatively new priority for Canada compared to Australia. Therefore, it is difficult to compare the internationalization policies of each country. Instead, it may be more beneficial to consider what Canada can learn from the literature surrounding Australia's internationalization efforts. The Australian experience reveals important lessons for policies and practices that Canada should adopt or avoid, specifically in relation to immigration, quality assurance, student safety and the need to move beyond international recruitment as a source of revenue.

Immigration

When Australia began awarding immigration points for educational credentials, they also assigned points based on the subject and market demand (Ziguras, 2012). If the Australian economy had a shortage of a particular type of job or profession, immigration could award additional points for that field to attract immigrants that would fill the gap. As a result, programs offering the quickest and easiest route to permanent resident status saw enrolment increases. This then led to an oversupply of these qualifications so the immigration pathway would close and points would be awarded for new in demand fields which would in turn see enrolment increases. Ziguras looks predominantly at private career colleges rather than universities in his discussion, so I wonder if the same cycles were present in university programming.

The private college program cycle was seen as damaging because if a migration policy changed so that an international student's program was no longer given preference in the migration process, the student returned to their home country with a credential that may have held little value in that economy. As a result, students took big risks under this system by spending considerable amounts of time and money in their quest to achieve permanent resident status. The Australian government recognized the perils of this system; under the immigration changes that came into effect in July 2011, points are no longer awarded for specific occupations (Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2011). Some (Azmat, Osborne, Le Rossignol, Jogulu Rentschler, et al., 2013) suggest that immigration policy changes will be a challenge for Australia's future

international student recruitment efforts, but given that this is a relatively recent development, little has been mentioned of the actual implications. Moving forward, the Australian government, or another interested stakeholder, should conduct a study to determine the effects of this change. However, even if international student enrolment declines, the change may have been justified because it was meant to protect the reputation of Australian education, damage to which would also impact enrolment numbers.

Quality

Awarding points for specific occupations also caused problems relating to program quality. Ziguras (2012) explains that certain vocational programs, such as hairdressing and cooking saw huge increases in international enrolment after they were added to the list of occupations that would yield more points. Sometimes the enrolment growth occurred in private career colleges which took advantage of students by charging high fees and offering poor quality instruction in exchange. Students tolerated this situation because these programs still presented a cheaper and quicker means of acquiring permanent resident status than the completion of a degree. Furthermore, some less-than-honest students enrolled in these programs without actually intending to pursue that profession after graduation and successful migration (Shah & Nair, 2011). Ziguras (2012) argues that Australia needs more accountability and supervision to ensure that providers do not take advantage of increased demand by students and that students looking for an easy way to obtain permanent resident status do not take advantage of the system.

Private vocational colleges are not the only Australian educational institutions whose quality has been called into question. There have also been concerns regarding Australia's provision of transnational education, including distance education, dual programs offered in collaboration with foreign institutions, and offshore campuses. In 2005, the Transnational Quality Strategy was established in order to increase the transparency of Australia's transnational education options and to strengthen the national quality framework. This was followed in 2008 by the creation of AusLIST, a database of offshore providers who meet Australian education standards. By the second semester of 2008, over 60,000 students were enrolled in Australian transnational education (Adams et al., 2010). However, despite the appeal of these programs to students and efforts to assure their quality, audits have prompted 53.3% of Australian universities to close (or plan to close) their offshore programs and partnerships (Shah & Nair, 2011). This may serve as a warning to Canada to carefully consider whether it should expand transnational educational opportunities, particularly offshore programs.

To assure the quality of international education more generally, Australia developed the Australian International Education Framework, a partnership of governments, institutions, private providers and service providers (Adams et al., 2010). Together, the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act and the National Code of Practice regulate the obligations of providers and the standards of student services and support. ESOS and the National Code also include the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS), a database of 1200 educational institutions. In order to recruit, enrol or teach

international students, an institution must be listed in this database. ESOS also includes an Assurance Fund to protect international students; if a program that an international student has already paid for is discontinued, the student must receive a refund or be enrolled in a suitable alternate program. The Provider Registration and International Students Management System (PRISMS) lists all of the education providers, programs and visa students and connects this information with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. These quality assurance mechanisms seem to be taken seriously in Australia. For example, most universities employ a full-time staff member to monitor compliance with ESOS regulations. Their responsibilities include drafting publications, monitoring agents who assist with recruitment, registering new or changed programs with CRICOS, setting fee structures, monitoring student performance and reporting to PRISMS. Adams et al. (2010) provide a detailed description of the different elements of the framework and argue that it has contributed to the generally positive reputation and success of Australia's international education sector.

The importance of national reputation cannot be overemphasized. As the Advisory Panel (2012) points out, an international student's first decision is which country to study in, not which particular institution to attend. Therefore, if Canada hopes to increase its share of the world's supply of high calibre international students, it must ensure that it upholds a reputation as a provider of high quality education. The Panel acknowledges that Canada's provinces and territories have jurisdiction over quality assurance and have established robust mechanisms. However, it also discusses the challenges associated with promoting systems that are not consistent across the country to an international audience. Including evaluation and quality assurance is also an important element of institutional international education strategies (Taylor, 2004). In his discussion of international student recruitment, McHale (2010) reveals his underlying assumption that international students are a threat to domestic students and measures must be taken to protect Canadians. One of his areas of concern is quality. He explains that if institutions (or the entire sector) want to increase international enrollment, there are two options – maintain the current number of postsecondary spaces but reduce availability for domestic students, or increase the overall number of seats so as not to displace domestic students. If domestic access is not to be impacted, an increased number of overall spaces could lead to a decline in quality which should be avoided. Australia, with its higher rates of international student enrolment, has demonstrated that a detailed national quality assurance framework may be effective in protecting both international and domestic students.

Student Safety

A series of assaults against Indian students in Australia in 2008 and 2009 has caused doubts regarding the safety of foreigners studying there. Although the incidents were publicized as racist attacks by the media in India, some have questioned whether they were actually racially motivated. Ziguras (2012) explains that violent assaults are not uncommon in Australia so the ethnicity of the victims in these incidents may have been coincidental. When Australia linked Australian credentials to permanent resident status, the pursuit of higher education became appealing to less

wealthy students. Obtaining a foreign credential is a large investment, one that may not have seemed worth the cost without the strong possibility of migration afterward. The financial pressures that these less wealthy students experienced caused them to live further away from the campuses they attended and to work in low-income jobs. Their employment and neighbourhoods may have exposed these students to situations that could lead to assaults more often than if they did not work and lived in more affluent areas. Furthermore, as Ziguras (2012) explains, men are more likely to be victims of violent attacks and most Indian students in Australia tend to be male, as opposed to students from East and Southeast Asia where gender tends to be split evenly.

It is not clear whether or not Ziguras believes this coincidental explanation, or if he is simply presenting both sides of the argument. However, regardless of whether the incidents were racially motivated, they were presented that way. After the assaults, the Indian government expressed concern to the Australian government, a popular Bollywood star refused to accept an honorary degree from an Australian university, and Bollywood's largest union pressured production companies to discontinue filming in Australia. Canada must present itself as offering a safe environment for international students if it hopes to increase their enrolment. The Advisory Panel (2012) recognizes this, identifying safety as one of the Canadian education sector's selling points.

Beyond Commercial Rationales

Much of the literature reviewed for this paper presents Australian international education as a commercial enterprise, and suggests that internationalization focuses on increased international student enrolment as a source of revenue. However, some scholars have begun to call for and recognize the beginnings of a third phase of internationalization beyond the former "aid" perspective and the current "trade" approach (Adams et al., 2010; Rizvi, 2011; Molony, 2011; Ryan, 2012). Adams et al. (2010) provide an in depth analysis of the historical development of international education in Australia with particular attention paid to the shift from aid to trade, the growth of transnational opportunities, strategies related to quality assurance, and study abroad programs. At the end of their article, the authors argue that Australia needs to take a more holistic approach to international education, including a more diverse international student body, more graduate students, improved student experience, better employment preparation and international research collaborations. Molony (2011) agrees and suggests that Australia has already begun to move into a new phase of mobility that is characterized by a more integrated view of internationalization. Stier (2010) explains that some view internationalization as "mirroring Western cultural imperialism and claims of global hegemony" (p. 8) and have criticized it as a contributor to brain drain in developing countries. Rizvi (2011) states that moving forward, internationalization efforts must be mutually beneficial for all parties, rather than asymmetrical as in the past and sees the emerging recognition of the value of non-Western traditions as encouraging. Ryan (2012) also explains that institutions and other international education stakeholders must be respectful of cultural differences and engage with intellectual traditions from around the world.

Support for international students

One of the areas of internationalization that needs to be improved in Australia is support for international students. Several scholars suggest that concerns over the exploitation of international students are one of the challenges facing Australian international education (Ziguras, 2012; Stier, 2010; Rizvi, 2011). If Australia is to extend beyond the commercial rationales for internationalization, the well-being of international students must be assured (and not just for the sake of public relations and promotion to prospective international students). Roberts & Dunworth (2012) indicate that satisfaction among international students in Australia varies. Therefore, institutions cannot simply admit these students to their programs and expect that they will successfully adjust to their new environment. Instead, institutions must provide adequate support for this transition. Unfortunately, the authors' study demonstrates a disconnect between senior staff and students in their view of student services, particularly regarding students' knowledge of services, their use, their accessibility and their barriers (Roberts & Dunworth, 2012). In a more recent article, Tran (2013) expresses concern over the tendency of international education research to focus on the deficiencies and challenges that international students face and how we can make up for those disadvantages. Instead, the author challenges researchers to focus on the transformative power of cross-border education and how educators can help international students achieve their full potential.

Mobility opportunities

The new phase of internationalization should also provide increased international opportunities for domestic students. Molony (2011) states that this has already become a government and institutional priority in Australia and that scholarships and travel grants have increased. Between 2005 and 2007, the number of international experiences among Australian students increased from 7,282 to 10,718 and 60% of the 2007 experiences received university financial support, but Adams et al. (2010) explain that these totals likely do not include a number of programs that are less than a semester in length. The authors (Adams et al., 2010) estimate that an additional 2000 experiences would fall into this category which would mean that approximately 8% of students in Australia have an international study experience. They (Adams et al., 2010) argue that most of the international experience growth has been in these short term programs such as summer studies and work placements, however "Australian universities have been slow to recognize this trend and to deal with it in a strategic fashion" (p. 123). Molony (2011) suggests that the quality of international learning experiences could be improved with increased structure and reflection during and after the students' time overseas. According to Malony (2011), this has the potential not only to increase participation, but also to promote greater integration between domestic and international students and improve participants' intercultural competencies, thereby preparing them for global labour markets. My own university has used reflection as part of local and global experiential learning programs. Participation in these programs and the reported personal transformation and learning of participants have increased since the integration of reflection. Therefore, I expect that Molony's suggestion that reflection be incorporated into study abroad will also be effective.

Student mobility is also recognized by the Advisory Panel (2012) as an

area in need of improvement in Canada's international education strategy. Although participation rates in Canada increased from 1% to over 2% between 2000 and 2006, they are still low in comparison to other countries. In their examination of students at York University, Trilokekar & Rasmi (2011) demonstrate that although most students believed international education had positive effects, they had a low level of awareness of international opportunities available through their university. If we want to increase participation in international learning programs, we need to improve students' awareness of the breadth of opportunities that are available, the process for participating and the supports available for participants. Looking at Australia as an example, Canada may also be able to improve participation rates by increasing the range of programs available, particularly in terms of their length.

Internationalization of the curriculum

Even if learning mobility improves, it is unrealistic to expect that all students will have an overseas experience. Therefore, if internationalization is truly to impact all students and assist in their development as "global citizens," it must be integrated into the curriculum at home. Barker, Hibbons & Woods (2013) and Volet & Ang (2012) identify some specific areas where internationalization at home can be improved in Australia. In their study of students enrolled in a master's program in international human resource management, Barker et al. (2013) explain that students identified knowledge, attitudes and skills as important elements of global citizenship. Their academic program provided them with many opportunities for skill development (although critical thinking skills could be improved), but the development of appropriate knowledge and attitudes was lacking. The authors argue that this part of the curriculum must be strengthened in order to fill in the gaps in global citizenship education.

Volet & Ang (2012) indicate that domestic Australian students and international Asian students prefer not to mix with one another in academic group work for a variety of reasons related to emotional connectedness, potential language barriers, pragmatism and negative stereotypes. The study explores business students' attitudes toward intercultural mixing before and after a group assignment. Some of the students were in culturally homogenous groups, and others were grouped with a combination of domestic and international students. Before the group work began, many students expressed their preference for working with their "own people." After the assignment, some of the students realized that they had been using stereotypes and that many of their concerns about intercultural group work were unfounded. However, these students did not indicate that they were more likely to form mixed groups again in the future. Therefore, Volet & Ang (2012) conclude that intercultural contact and communication must be intentionally included in courses and programs because they likely will not occur if students are permitted to make their own choices.

Student mobility is less common among Canadian students; therefore, one could argue that internationalization at home is even more important in the Canadian context (Farquhar, 2008). It would be helpful to conduct similar studies in Canada, to determine if the curriculum allows students to develop their intercultural and global knowledge and attitudes, and if students take advantage of opportunities to interact with individuals from

different cultural backgrounds. Even though Barker et al. and Volet & Ang's studies were completed in Australia and may not necessarily apply in the Canadian context, they remind the reader that internationalization is not an end in itself, nor can it be assumed that internationalization is achieving its broader aims of citizenship and individual development.

The body of literature surrounding internationalization of higher education in Canada, while smaller than that of Australia, does not seem to have the same focus on international student enrolment. Instead, scholars of Canadian internationalization focus on diverse issues, including the non-economic costs and benefits of international students (McHale, 2010), the role of globalization and internationalization as an "eduscape" (Beck, 2012), faculty members' engagement in internationalization (Friesen, 2013), the effectiveness of teaching preparation programs for international graduate students (Guo & Chase, 2011), and mobility opportunities for domestic students (Trilokekar & Rasmi, 2011). Perhaps because Canada has been a relatively small player in international education and has only recently made global competitiveness a priority, internationalization efforts in Canada have not had as strong of a commercial orientation as they have in Australia. Moving forward, as different countries recognize the need for a new form of internationalization (a "third phase" for Australia), Canada may have a competitive advantage; without needing to change previous commercial policies, it may have more flexibility to create an international education landscape that meets 21st century global needs and expectations.

Prospects for the Future

Looking ahead, Western providers of international education will face a series of challenges. Mazzarol & Soutar (2008) explain that competition is increasing because traditional sending countries, such as China and India, are strengthening their own systems which may encourage students to stay home rather than studying abroad. Others, including Hong Kong and Singapore, are becoming destinations for international students or the site of knowledge hubs, as is the case of Dubai and Qatar. Australia in particular faces the additional challenges of a strong Australian dollar, changes to visa and migration rules (including the removal of preferred occupations from the permanent resident application), and questions regarding international students' safety (Azmat et al., 2013). However, seven Australian universities are included in the Top 200 World University Rankings compiled by Times Higher Education (2013) and institutional reputation will continue to be an important factor in overcoming challenges to recruiting international students (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2008).

Other push factors will continue to encourage international students to leave their home countries. These include the view that a foreign degree is more valuable and can lead to improved social status, a lack of educational opportunities in home countries that provide insufficient spaces for their citizens, the belief that foreign education is of a higher quality than that available in their home country, the desire to better understand Western culture, and the intention to migrate to the country after studies are completed (Azmat et al., 2013). Pull factors that encourage students to attend university in a specific country include university reputation, quality and choice of programs, quality of staff, existing social networks of family and friends who already reside in the country, the opportunity to gain

permanent resident status, the cost of the education, and geographic proximity to the home country (Azmat et al., 2013).

Australia, in particular, appeals to international students because English is the medium of instruction, marketable and relevant degree programs are available, and graduates have the opportunity to migrate to Australia (Kettle & Luke, 2013). Other selling points of Australia are the relatively low living costs and tuition fees compared to some global competitors, the agreeable climate, and the friendly reputation of the locals (Adams et al., 2010). Canada's selling points, as identified by the Advisory Panel (2012), include the consistently high quality of education, a reputation of excellence, a safe and multicultural environment, the option to study in English or French, relatively affordable tuition fees and costs of living, and the option to work during studies and apply to work in Canada after graduation. The Panel (2012) also states that demand for international postsecondary education is expected to grow from 3.7 million students in 2009 to 6.4 million students in 2025, which is encouraging for countries like Canada that hope to expand their efforts and successes in this area.

Conclusions

A review of the literature on internationalization in Australia and Canada reveals several gaps. There is a need for more studies that focus on developments at the program or student level. Detailed descriptions of national strategies are already available; if internationalization is not the end goal and is expected to provide other benefits, researchers must determine if those broader aims are being achieved. Increased international enrolment numbers and participation in mobility opportunities are important goals, but not the only ones. Indeed, these goals are desirable because of the other benefits that they lead to. Both Australia and Canada need to study these aspects of internationalization. The most difficult outcomes to measure may be those related to the internationalization of curriculum because the benefits that this approach is expected bring are often the least tangible. How can one measure global awareness and intercultural competencies? Researchers must attempt to identify appropriate measurement tools and then conduct studies to improve our understanding of the benefits of the internationalization of higher education.

In this paper, I have argued that Australia's experiences offer Canada important lessons regarding immigration's ties to international student recruitment, the importance of ensuring quality and student safety, and the need to move past the belief that internationalization equates to international student recruitment for the purposes of generating revenue. Internationalization has other dimensions that can provide many other benefits. On the other hand, one might argue that these other dimensions and these other benefits are too costly to achieve. Instead, recruiting international students may offer the most benefits in relation to cost. However, as the Advisory Panel has shown, the revenue provided by international students is only one benefit of many. Increased international student enrolment and participation of domestic students in overseas experiences can strengthen relations with other countries which can improve trade. A strong international reputation can also attract better researchers and faculty to Canadian institutions which assists in Canada's technological development and could improve the experience of Canadian students. Furthermore, if the rest of the world is ramping up its

internationalization efforts, can Canada afford not to compete? One might also argue that the Canadian context is unique and that the Australian lessons may not apply here. However, the Australian experience is still worth considering. Other countries, including Australia, have already invested considerable time and resources into their international education efforts. Looking at their failures and successes could help Canada to more efficiently direct its internationalization efforts even if the experiences of other countries do not fit neatly into the Canadian context.

Overall, the review of the literature in this paper reveals that internationalization is complex. It extends far beyond international recruitment efforts to increase revenue for institutions and to increase spending in local economies. Internationalization should be pursued for its long term benefits, including the development of a strong work force through the migration of high quality international students and the development of global competencies in domestic students. Canada's long term strategy will be dependent on its global reputation which will be closely tied to quality assurance. Australia's international education efforts have been particularly successful in terms of recruiting international students, but support for these students, international opportunities for domestic students, and internationalization at home must be improved. Canada can learn from Australia's successful recruitment strategies, but should also be warned that internationalization should not be pursued simply for commercial benefits.

References

Adams, T., Banks, M., & Olsen, A. (2010). International education in Australia: from aid to trade to internationalization. In R. Bhandari & P. Blumenthal (Eds.), *International students and global mobility in higher education: national trends and new directions* (pp. 107-128). New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Retrieved December 3, 2013, from <http://lib.myilibrary.com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/Open.aspx?id=393569>

Altbach, P. G. (2012). Corruption: a key challenge to internationalization. *International Higher Education* 69, 2-4.

Azmat, F., Osborne, A., Le Rosignol, K., Jogulu, U., Rentschler, R., Robottom, I., & Malathy, V. (2013). Understanding aspirations and expectations of international students in Australian higher education. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 33(1), 97-111. Retrieved December 5, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1322239837?accountid=14771>

Barker, M. C., Hibbons, R. T., & Woods, P. (2013). Bringing forth the graduate as a global citizen: an exploratory study of masters-level business students in Australia. In S. Sovic & M. Blythman (Eds.), *International students negotiating higher education: critical perspectives* (pp. 142-154). New York: Routledge.

Beck, K. (2012). Globalization/s: reproduction and resistance in the internationalization of higher education. *Canadian Journal of Education* 35(3), 133-148. Retrieved December 7, 2013 from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1322239400?accountid=14771>

Clark, I. D., Trick, D., & Van Loon, R. (2011). *Academic reform: policy*

options for improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of undergraduate education in Ontario. Montreal and Kingston: Queen's Policy Studies Series, McGill-Queen's University Press.

Department of Immigration and Border Protection, Australian Government. (2011). *1 July 2011 – points test for certain skilled migration visas.* Retrieved December 12, 2013, from <http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/pdf/points-test.pdf>

Department of Immigration and Border Protection, Australian Government. (2013). *What is the points test?* Retrieved December 12, 2013, from <http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/points-test.htm>

Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy. (2013). *International education: a key driver of Canada's future prosperity.* Retrieved December 7, 2013, from <http://www.international.gc.ca/education/report-rapport/strategy-strategie/>

Farquhar, R. H. (2008). *European universities and their international perspectives.* Retrieved December 7, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/61888398?accountid=14771>

Friesen, R. (2013). Faculty member engagement in Canadian university internationalization: a consideration of understanding, motivations and rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education* 17(3), 209-227. Retrieved December 7, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1373086543?accountid=14771>

Guo, S., & Chase, M. (2011). Internationalisation of higher education: integrating international students into Canadian academic environment. *Teaching in Higher Education* 16(3), 305-318. Retrieved December 7, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/870285210?accountid=14771>

Kettle, M. & Luke, A. (2013). *The critical meets cultural: international students' responses to critical, dialogic postgraduate education in a western university.* In S. Sovic & M. Blythman (Eds.), *International students negotiating higher education: critical perspectives* (pp. 104-123). New York: Routledge.

Knight, J. (2006). Internationalization: concepts, complexities and challenges. In J. Forest and P. Altbach (Eds.), *International Handbook of Higher Education*, Part One (pp. 207-228). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.

Marginson, S., & Considine, M. (2000). *The enterprise university: power, governance and reinvention in Australia.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mazzarol, T. W., & Soutar, G. N. (2008). Australian educational institutions international markets: a correspondence analysis. *International Journal of Educational Management* 22(3), 229-238. Retrieved December 5, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/61974170?accountid=14771>

McHale, J. (2010). Structural incentives to attract foreign students to Canada's postsecondary educational system: a comparative analysis. In R. Bhandari & P. Blumenthal (Eds.), *International students and global mobility in higher education: national trends and new directions* (pp. 167-191). New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Retrieved December 3, 2013, from <http://lib.myilibrary.com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/Open.aspx?id=393569>

Meiras, S. (2004). International education in Australian universities: understandings, dimensions and problems. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 26(3), 371-380. Retrieved December 5, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/62125742?accountid=14771>

Miller, H. D. R. (1995). *The management of change in universities: universities, state and economy in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Molony, J. (2011). Curricular and extra-curricular programs supporting improved international learning mobility experiences: an emerging trend in Australia. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* 21, 211-235. Retrieved December 4, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1312425793?accountid=14771>

Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development. (2010). Immigration population. In OECD, *OECD factbook 2010: economic, environmental, and social statistics*. (pp. 22-23). Paris: OECD Publishing. Retrieved December 15, 2013, from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/factbook-2010-en>

Rizvi, F. (2011). Theorizing student mobility in an era of globalization. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice* 17(6), 693-701. Retrieved December 4, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/964183930?accountid=14771>

Roberts, P., & Dunworth, K. (2012). Staff and student perceptions of support services for international students in higher education: a case study. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 34(5), 517-528. Retrieved December 3, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1322252489?accountid=14771>

Ryan, J. (2010). Internationalisation of doctoral education: possibilities for new knowledge and understandings. *Australian Universities Review* 54(1), 55-63. Retrieved December 3, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1031151372?accountid=14771>

Shah, M., & Nair, C. S. (2011). International higher education in Australia: unplanned future. *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education* 15(4), 129-131. Retrieved December 5, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/964178772?accountid=14771>

Stier, J. (2010). International education: trends, ideologies and alternative pedagogical approaches. *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 8(3), 330-349. Retrieved December 4, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/762467137?accountid=14771>Taylor (2004)

Times Higher Education (2013). *World University Rankings 2013-2014*. Retrieved December 12, 2013, from <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/2013-14/world-ranking>

Tran, L. (2013). Transformative learning and international students negotiating higher education. In S. Sovic & M. Blythman (Eds.), *International students negotiating higher education: critical perspectives* (pp. 124-141). New York: Routledge.

Trilokekar, R. D., & Rasmi, S. (2011). Student perceptions of international education and study abroad: a pilot study at York University, Canada. *Intercultural Education* 22(6), 495-511. Retrieved December 7, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/964183428?accountid=14771>

Volet, E. S., & Ang, G. (2012). Culturally mixed groups on international campuses: an opportunity for inter-cultural learning. *Higher Education Research and Development* 31(1), 21-37. Retrieved December 3, 2013, from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/964182565?accountid=14771>

Young, R. M. (1992). *Linking the sectors of post-secondary education: a comparative study of Australia and Ontario* (Doctoral Thesis, Higher Education Group, Ontario Institute of Studies in Education University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada).

Ziguras, C. (2012). Learning the hard way: lessons from Australia's decade of innovation in student migration policy. In D. E. Neubauer & K. Kuroda (Eds.), *Mobility and Migration in Asian Pacific Higher Education* (pp. 39-52). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kelly Shaw works in the Office of the Registrar at Western University. She can be contacted at kellyc.shaw@mail.utoronto.ca

◀ [Contents](#)

The views expressed by the authors are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of The College Quarterly or of Seneca College.

Copyright © 2014 - The College Quarterly, Seneca College of Applied Arts and Technology