New Zealand PTE Sector

International Student Private Providers Barometer
Academic Year 2012

Summary Results
Private Training Establishments (PTEs) Overview

1. 55 PTEs participated in the New Zealand International Student Barometer in 2012; this represents 33% of the total sector population.

2. Responses were received from 1,454 international students studying at participating PTEs, representing 10% of the total number of international PTE students studying in New Zealand in semester 2 in 2012*.

Response

3. The sample included more responses from males (62%) compared to females (37%).

4. Two nationality groups dominated the sample (India 37% and China 23%). Nationality spread is similar in the global benchmark group, but this sample suggests that New Zealand has a higher proportion of Indian students in PTE courses.

5. 54% of students studied at Diploma level; the remainder of the sample is spread between Graduate Diploma, Degree, Advanced Diploma and Certificate level with 18% selecting ‘other’.

6. The largest proportion of the sample were in their first or last year of study.

7. Business, Finance, Property Services and Administration accounted for 45% of the sample followed by Computing, Information Technology and Information Systems (14%).

8. The majority of the sample were funded either through their family or own funds.

Recommendation

9. 76% of international students would recommend their institution to others thinking of applying. This is 3% below the average of the global benchmark group. Large variations exist between New Zealand PTE institutions as to whether students would recommend their institution, with scores ranged between 60% - 100%. There were also notable differences by nationality, study level and student type. Colombian students were most likely to recommend and Thai students least likely to recommend, although these groups represent a small base number of the total sample. Of the four main study types, exchange students were the least likely to recommend** and certificate level students were least likely to ‘actively’ recommend.
Pre-Arrival and the Student Decision-Making Process

10. Australia is the main alternative destination for students in the PTE sector - 36% of international students considered Australia as a study destination during their decision making process. The USA (33%) and Canada (32%) were also considerations. However at the point of application 77% of the sample population applied only to New Zealand, with only a minority applying also to Australia (5%), USA (7%) and Canada (6%). This suggests that the final choice of study destination is made prior to the application stage. This is consistent across all New Zealand sector results.

11. Teaching quality (98%) and Personal Safety (98%) were the top factors for students when considering their study destination. The next most important factors included institution reputation (96%) and reputation of the qualification (96%). The least important factors were friends already in New Zealand (56%) and proximity to home country (60%). These results followed a similar pattern to the global benchmark group; however the benchmark group placed slightly less importance on the reputation of the institution and qualification as well as the cost of study.

12. Agents played a key role in the decision-making process for students in the sample, with 63% identifying the agent as the key influencer in choice of institution. Word of mouth promotion was critical to influencing choice of institution with the three main influencers being agents, friends (31%) and parents (22%). This changes slightly by study level with friends being the key influencer for Certificate students (71%), Graduate (79%) & Advanced (77%). Diploma students were most influenced by agents.

13. The majority of applicants (56%) applied to PTE institutions through an agent, with 89% of these respondents stating that they received either a good or very good service from their agent. This is consistent with the results of the global benchmark group, where 90% of students who applied through an agent, stated they had received a good or very good service. 76% of students were also willing to recommend their agent to others students thinking of applying.

Careers, Expectations & Working

14. Careers and employment expectations were high on the agenda with 46% of students expecting their institution to provide advice, support (44%) and training (44%). These expectations were very similar to the expectations of students in the global benchmark group, suggesting that careers and employment support from the institution is a global expectation for PTE students.

15. Just over half the sample indicated that they would like to stay in New Zealand for such things as work (short and long term) (25%), further study (18%) and migration/permanent residence (9%). A large proportion were undecided (28%).
Arrival Experience

16. 94% of students in the sample were satisfied with their overall arrival experience, this is 6% above the global benchmark group’s average.

17. When broken down into individual elements, areas where students identified exceptionally high satisfaction levels were: Registration (95%), Finance Office (94%), Meeting staff (94%), Opportunity to make friends from their home country (94%) and Opportunity to make friends from other countries on arrival [(93%) excluding New Zealand students]. All of these elements were above the global benchmark group’s average.

18. There were no notable areas of concern within the aggregated sample for the arrival process; however there were differences in satisfaction levels between institutions but the majority were scoring 75% and above.

Learning Experience

19. 89% of respondents stated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their overall learning experience. This was 2% above the Global benchmark group’s average score.

20. Areas that represented the highest satisfaction were; the English Language ability of academic members of staff (94%), the expert knowledge of the teaching staff (92%), learning support (92%), language support (92%), course content (92%) and assessment (92%). When compared to the global benchmark group, course organisation (88%) showed the highest score reporting 4% above the average.

21. There were several areas that may require further investigation. These include: the learning technology, Library resources (physical and online), careers advice from teaching staff and opportunity to gain work experience as part of a course of study. All of these elements (apart from learning technology) scored below 80% satisfaction and all were below the global benchmark group’s average satisfaction score. Nonetheless careers advice and work experience are not specific issues related to the PTE sector. Low satisfaction scores were reported at a national and global level across the majority of education sectors (University, ITP and ELP).

Living Experience

22. Overall 88% of respondents stated that they were satisfied with their living experience. Japanese students, though representing a small proportion of the total sample, were the least satisfied (70%).

23. Areas that displayed high satisfaction include: ability to make friends from their home country (93%); the institution’s eco-friendly attitude (92%), ability to make friends from other countries (92%), feeling
safe (91%) and access to accommodation (90%). All of these elements were above the global benchmark group’s score.

24. Cost is an issue for many students, with all elements related to cost showing low satisfaction scores. This includes: living cost (65%), accommodation cost (66%), opportunities to earn money (66%) and availability of financial support from the institution (77%). However all of these elements were above the global benchmark group’s score, with the exception of ability to earn money showing -8% below. Cost is a national issue for international students in New Zealand.

25. Other areas with low satisfaction were; transport links (78%) and sports facilities (78%) although variation exists between institutions and regional location.

26. The data showed no significant issues with perceptions on safety with the majority of respondents stating that they felt fairly safe or very safe in their surroundings. A small percentage of respondents reported that they did not feel particularly safe on public transport (11%) or in public places (11%).

27. When asked how many close friends students had with various groups of people, the survey showed that international students had made one or more close friends with people from their own country (95%) compared to 89% for people from other countries and 73% for New Zealanders.

28. The above pattern continued when asked how much social and study time international students spent with the key groups of people, with New Zealanders showing the lowest scores.

Support Experience

29. 89% of respondents reported that they were satisfied with the overall support that they had received from their institution with little variation across providers.

30. The International Office and Counselling (though representing a small proportion of the total sample) received the highest scores, both of which were above the global benchmark group’s benchmark.

31. The careers service showed the lowest satisfaction rating (76%) and was also -11.8% below the global benchmark group’s benchmark. It is worth noting that students were only asked to rate their satisfaction with support services they had used: 36% used the International Office, Counselling (26%) and Careers Service (22%).

* Total PTE student numbers in Semester 2 2012 have been estimated based on Semester 1 numbers taken from the Education Export Levy data returns 2012. Semester 2 returns are not due until July 2012.

** Four main student types were reported: full-time/part-time, study abroad and student exchange