

# AUIDF

2024 LEARNING ABROAD

**FROM RECOVERY TO RELEVANCE:  
THE STATE OF LEARNING ABROAD  
IN AUSTRALIA**

**National Report**

September 2025

# 2024 Benchmark of Learning Abroad (BLA)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A warm thank you to our esteemed AUIDF BLA steering group, whose insights and knowledge have helped shape the development of this report.

Christine Martin, Director, Global Engagement at Southern Cross University  
Simon Davies Burrows, Manager Internationalisation at Edith Cowan University  
Linda Rust, Global Learning at University of Melbourne  
Davina Potts, Director of Future Students at University of Melbourne  
Joel Wittwer, Head of International Relations at Murdoch University

We also want to express our gratitude to the twenty-one participating universities and eleven non-participating universities for their valuable contributions and collaboration in this significant research effort.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. LEVELS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION .....</b>	<b>9</b>
1.1. Student participation in 2024 .....	10
1.2. Student participation by study level.....	11
1.3. Participation rate from the graduating cohort .....	12
<b>2. STUDENT PREFERENCES .....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1. Destinations.....	15
2.2. Type of experiences.....	17
2.3. Delivery mode .....	20
2.4. Duration of experiences .....	21
<b>3. STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS .....</b>	<b>22</b>
3.1. Participation by gender .....	23
3.2. Participation by field of study.....	24
3.3. Participation of domestic and international students.....	26
<b>4. ROLE OF FUNDING, ACADEMIC CREDIT AND THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS.</b>	<b>27</b>
4.1. Overall funding for Learning Abroad.....	28
4.2. Extent of funding for Learning Abroad.....	29
<b>5. ACCESS AND EQUITY IN LEARNING ABROAD .....</b>	<b>34</b>
5.1. Student participation (access and equity categories) .....	35
5.2. Participation rate (access and equity categories).....	36
<b>APPENDIX 1. DEFINITIONS.....</b>	<b>37</b>

# AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES LEARNING ABROAD IN 2024

TOTAL NUMBER OF EXPERIENCES reported by 32 universities:

# 43,033\*

## Learning Abroad experiences

THIS FIGURE REPRESENTS 74% OF THE LEVELS REPORTED IN 2019



### 2 in 10

In aggregate, 21% of the undergraduate graduating cohort participated in a Learning Abroad experience.



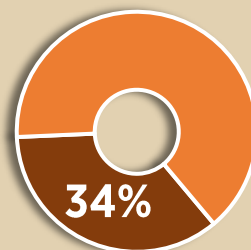
### Only 4% virtual

In a significant shift from previous years, on average, only 4% of the experiences were delivered virtually in 2024.

### TYPES OF EXPERIENCES

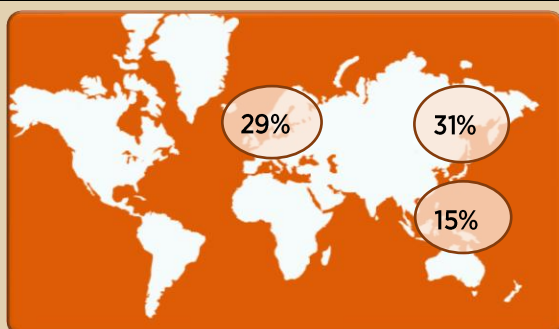
In aggregate, 81% of the experiences in 2024 were for a short-term duration.

(Between 1 and 12 weeks)



On average, 34% of the experiences in 2024 were Faculty-led study tours.

### MAIN DESTINATIONS (Averages)



Europe, Northeast Asia & Southeast Asia, were the most popular regions in 2024

(Based on the average reported by 21 universities).

\*The aggregate participation in Learning Abroad includes information reported by the twenty-one participating universities and eleven non-participating universities who provided overall numbers of student participation to continue the timeline.

# INTRODUCTION

**The AUIDF Benchmark of Learning Abroad (BLA) supports the enhancement and formulation of strategies concerning outbound student mobility and international virtual experiences.**

Studymove has developed this report on behalf of The Australian Universities International Directors' Forum (AUIDF) to highlight the benchmark insights.

This report provides a national view of the 2024 benchmark results and will assist universities and stakeholders in better understanding the status of Learning Abroad in Australia and provide direction in the refining of processes, distributing resources, advising senior management, and making informed decisions aligned with AUIDF's student mobility objectives.

This study also endeavours to report on key data relating to Learning Abroad and facilitate communication with key stakeholders and the overall promotion of study opportunities and grants, thereby amplifying the importance of Learning Abroad in the international education sector in Australia.

**This year, the analysis includes the responses of twenty-one participating Australian universities.**

The report provides an extensive analysis of various key indicators using data collected via a questionnaire. It benchmarks the results of each university and includes the average and median for each indicator and for the twenty-one universities.

## ABOUT AUIDF

**AUIDF provides a platform for enhanced professionalism, cooperation and cohesion amongst university professionals leading their university's international engagement activities.**

**The aim of AUIDF is to support university stakeholders to advance the quality reputation of international education in Australia through increased cooperation and cohesion. There are currently 39 member universities.**



**AUIDF**

AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORS' FORUM

**This analysis supports the recovery and relevance of Learning Abroad in Australia.**



## LEARNING ABROAD EXPERIENCES GREW IN 2024

**Under very challenging conditions across the university environment, student participation in Learning Abroad continued to recover in 2024 with an aggregate 25% growth reported between 2023 and 2024. Although still below 2019 levels, the sector has reported encouraged growth.**


Learning Abroad teams at Australian universities continue to adjust their teams, resources and programs to meet the increased demand for face-to-face experiences after virtual experiences reported another decline in 2024.

The benchmark of 2024 data is extremely useful to compare the results with other participating universities and assist your university in gaining data-driven insights into how to plan for future Learning Abroad strategies.

### TOPICS COVERED IN THIS REPORT

1. **Levels of Student Participation.**
2. **Student Preferences.**
3. **Student Demographics.**
4. **Role of Credit, Funding and Third-Party providers.**
5. **Learning Abroad Structure, Operations and Resources.**
6. **Access and Equity.**

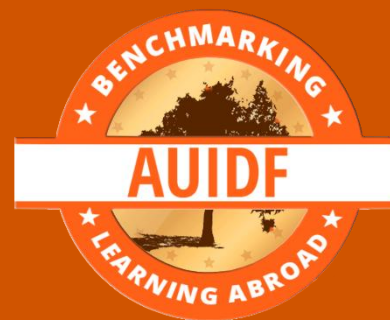
### Twenty-one universities participated in the 2024 Benchmark of Learning Abroad (BLA).

	<b>Australian Catholic University</b>		<b>The University of New South Wales</b>
	<b>Australian National University</b>		<b>The University of Newcastle</b>
	<b>Curtin University</b>		<b>The University of Queensland</b>
	<b>Deakin University</b>		<b>The University of Sydney</b>
	<b>Edith Cowan University</b>		<b>The University of Western Australia</b>
	<b>Griffith University</b>		<b>University of South Australia</b>
	<b>Monash University</b>		<b>University of Tasmania</b>
	<b>Murdoch University</b>		<b>University of Technology Sydney</b>
	<b>RMIT University</b>		<b>University of Wollongong</b>
	<b>Southern Cross University</b>		<b>Western Sydney University</b>
	<b>The University of Melbourne</b>		

# METHODOLOGY

This comparative analysis of Learning Abroad strategies is based on data reported by twenty-one Australian universities.

A questionnaire was distributed in April 2025 to collect key metrics to measure the levels of student participation in Learning Abroad and the resources used for the execution of these strategies in 2024.



## IMPORTANCE OF BENCHMARKING LEARNING ABROAD

The report delves into benchmarking, comparing the international operations of each university. This includes an in-depth assessment of mobility strategies, as well as the performance of each participating institution in relation to one another.

**The BLA insights will enable universities to learn from each other, adapt to evolving challenges, and provide exceptional educational experiences while remaining relevant in the dynamic landscape of higher education.**

## DATA PERIODICITY

In this year's report, our primary focus is on presenting a comprehensive comparison among the twenty-one participating universities for the year 2024.

## DEFINITION OF "LEARNING ABROAD EXPERIENCE"

For an adequate comparison, this analysis considers face-to-face and virtual international learning experiences\* undertaken by students enrolled in full-degree programs in 2024. This study does not include students enrolled in full-degree programs at university campuses outside of Australia.

\*To ensure comparability across the universities, this analysis excludes non-credit virtual experiences, classified as "other" type of experience and with a duration of less than 2 weeks.

## HOW THE INSIGHTS ARE PRESENTED

To provide additional comparison points, this study includes aggregate, average and median values for each indicator.

**Average** - We used an arithmetic mean which is calculated by dividing the total of all responses by the number of responses. With this information, universities can identify their position against the other universities and against the average of the group.

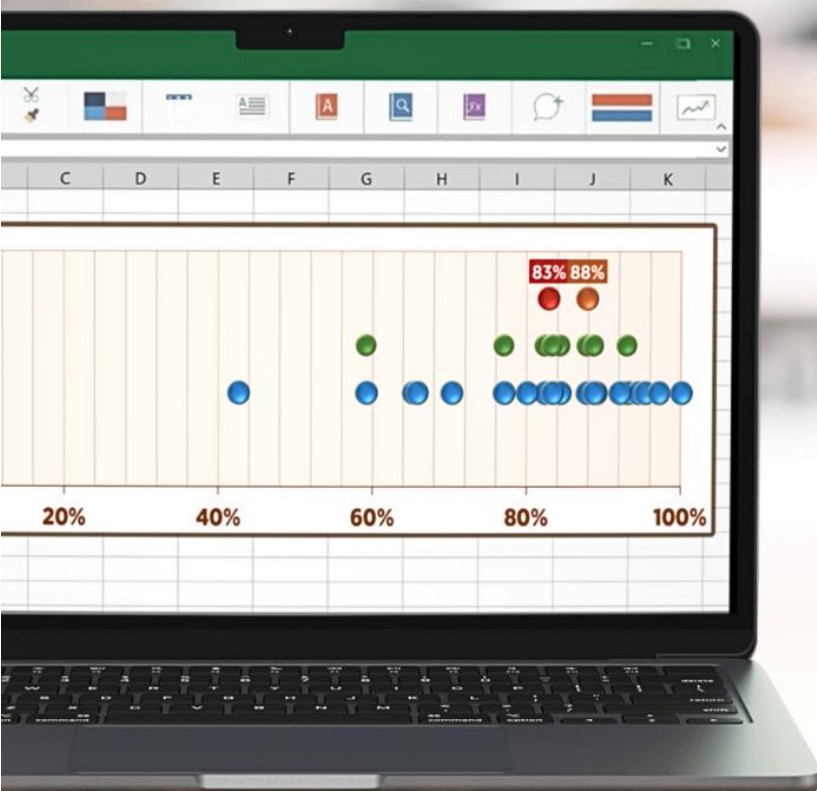
**Median** - The median is the exact middle point of the group when they are ranked in order. When the data is not symmetrical, and universities report extreme values, the median (rather than the average) provides a more accurate indicator of any general tendency in the data.

The report also includes graphical representations which illustrate the position of each university in comparison to other universities. Time-series data is also included for key data points.

For the graphical representations (Charts) in this report, we highlight the response of each institution with a black circle ●, the average with a red circle ● and the median with an orange circle ●.

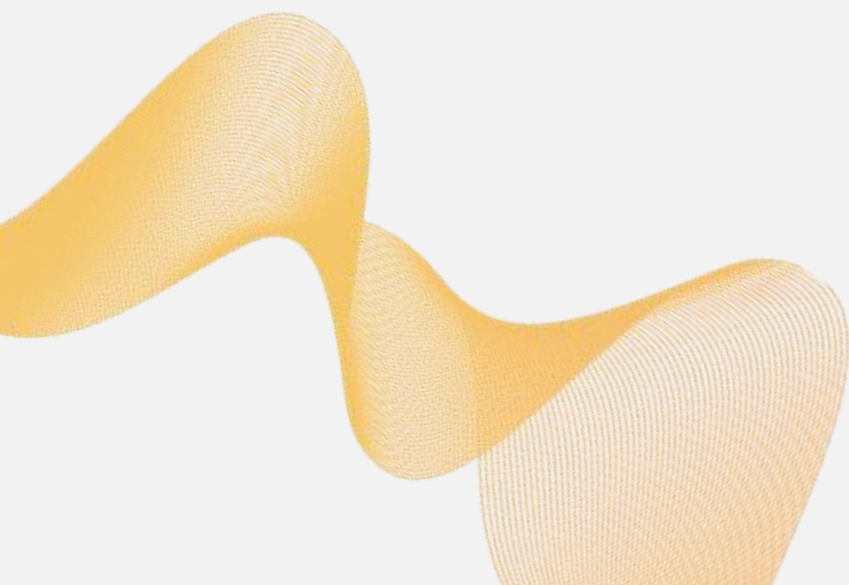
### Comparison with 2023 data

Throughout the report we will also highlight 2024 results alongside data reported in 2023. In 2023, twenty-three universities participated and reported their data, compared with twenty-one universities in 2024. As a result, please bear in mind that when we reference 2023, the data is based on twenty-three universities rather than the twenty-one in 2024. Although comparisons between the two periods are statistically valid, we suggest exercising caution when interpreting the results.



# 1. LEVELS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION

This section analyses the number of Learning Abroad experiences which were completed during 2024 and compares students' participation across all universities. These insights will aid universities to continue to support these programs and initiatives as integral components of a holistic academic experience.



### 1.1. Student participation in 2024

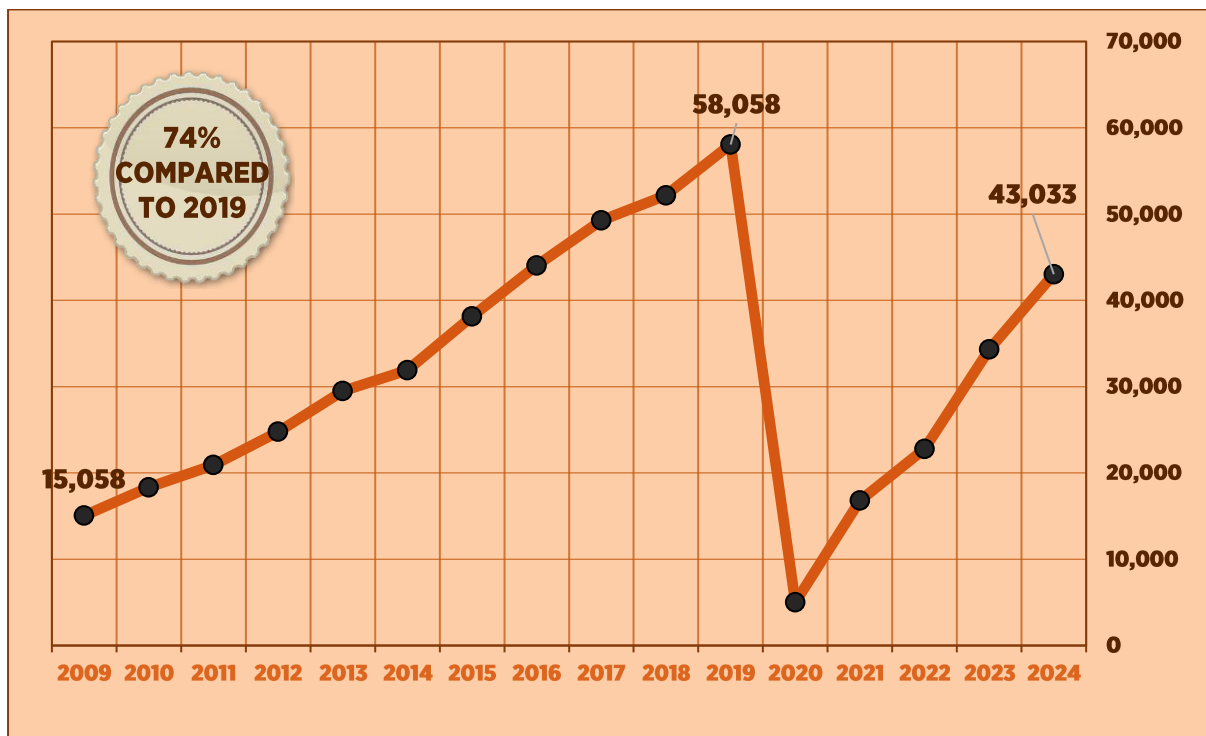
In 2024, Learning Abroad experiences represented 74% of the levels reported in 2019 and a 25.4% increase compared to 2023.

The number of Learning Abroad experiences reported by Australian universities in 2024 showed continued and positive growth. Although the number of Learning Abroad experiences is still below numbers reported in 2019, the large majority universities reported growth especially in face-to-face experiences and participation in short-term experiences.

The chart below illustrates the aggregate 2024 participation in Learning Abroad and includes information reported by the **twenty-one participating universities and eleven non-participating universities** who provided overall numbers of student participation to continue the timeline.

In aggregate, the thirty-two universities reported **43,033 Learning Abroad experiences in 2024** (34,309 experiences were reported by thirty-four universities in 2023) which represented 74% of the levels reported in 2019 (58,058 experiences were reported in 2019 by 34 universities) and 25% growth compared to 2023.

**Chart 1**  
Aggregate number of Learning Abroad experiences (2009 – 2024)



## 1.2. Student participation by study level

**Undergraduate students represented the largest group engaging in a Learning Abroad experience.**

In 2024, the twenty-one participating universities reported a total of 38,608 Learning Abroad experiences (30,644 experiences were reported by twenty-three universities in 2023).

The aggregate number of experiences reported for all students grew by 25% in 2024 compared to 2023. (50.5% growth was recorded between 2023 and 2022).

**Of the 38,608 experiences reported in aggregate in 2024, 65% were at the undergraduate level followed by 22% at the postgraduate level and 13% were at the research level.**

However, we should note that some universities reported difficulties in reporting the participation of postgraduate students.

**Table 1**  
**Number of Learning Abroad experiences by study level – 2024**

Study Level	Aggregate 2024	Average 2024	Median 2024
Undergraduate	25,000	1,190	857
PG Coursework	8,365	398	82
PG Research	5,239	249	70
Other/Do Not Know	4	0	0
<b>TOTAL (Participants Only)</b>	<b>38,608</b>	<b>1,838</b>	<b>1,125</b>

In 2024, among the twenty-one universities, the average number of **undergraduate Learning Abroad experiences** was 1,190 (966 experiences were reported by twenty-three universities in 2023) which represented an average of 74% of the total number of experiences in 2024 (83% in 2023). The median was 78% in 2024 (88% in 2023).

### 1.3. Participation rate from the graduating cohort

**An average of 14% of graduating students engaged in a Learning Abroad experience in 2024, up 11% from 2023.**

Comparing Learning Abroad experiences can sometimes favour universities with larger on-campus student populations. Larger universities may have a higher participation rate simply due to their size.

To mitigate this potential distortion and ensure a meaningful comparison of student participation in Learning Abroad programs, universities have adopted a metric that estimates the ratio of student participation in Learning Abroad relative to their graduating cohort each year.

To enable the calculation of this participation rate, universities were asked to supply data on the number of completing students for 2024. Twenty-one universities provided sufficient data to calculate the participation rates.

**In 2024, the twenty-one universities reported an aggregate participation rate of 17% for all students (including domestic and international students). The average was 14% and the median was 12%.**

**Table 2**  
**Participation rate in Learning Abroad - All study levels - 2024**

Participation rate in Learning Abroad	Aggregate 2024	Average 2024	Median 2024
Undergraduate Students	21%	18%	15%
Postgraduate Coursework Students	8%	6%	3%
Postgraduate Research Students	58%	49%	34%
<b>ALL STUDENTS TOTAL</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>12%</b>

#### The Role of Learning Abroad in supporting research in Australia

This year, 5,239 postgraduate research students participated in a Learning Abroad experience representing 14% of the total Learning Abroad participation in 2024.

In 2024, the participation rate of domestic and international research students was 58% in aggregate (49% average and 34% median).

Access to Learning Abroad opportunities for research students enhances their academic experience and fosters global collaboration, helping to advance the research agenda of universities. Research is a cornerstone of Australia's universities' institutional goals, and Learning Abroad plays a vital role in supporting this essential part of their strategic objectives.

### Participation rate for domestic students

To complement this question, we requested information considering domestic students only (Australian citizens and permanent residents). All twenty-one universities provided data which enabled the participation rate to be calculated for this student cohort.

**The average and median domestic student participation rate rose in 2024.** In 2024, the average was 16% (13% in 2023), and the median was 13% (10% in 2023).

**Table 3**  
**Participation rate in Learning Abroad for domestic students only – 2024**

Participation rate Domestic Students only	Aggregate 2024	Average 2024	Median 2024
Undergraduate Domestic Students	21%	19%	15%
Postgraduate Coursework Domestic Students	6%	5%	3%
Postgraduate Research Domestic Students	43%	40%	20%
<b>ALL DOMESTIC STUDENTS</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>13%</b>



## 2.

# STUDENT PREFERENCES

This section explores student preferences towards Learning Abroad in relation to the destinations where their Learning Abroad experience takes place, experience type, delivery mode and duration.



## 2.1. Destinations

### China and the United Kingdom continued to be the top destinations in 2024.

This section analyses the location of Learning Abroad experiences in 2024. Universities were asked to report the destination country for face-to-face Learning Abroad experiences and where the host organisation was based if the experience had a virtual component.

All twenty-one universities reported the destination of a total of 38,608 Learning Abroad experiences in 2024 which took place in 129 destinations. **The top 5 destinations reported in 2024 were China, United Kingdom, United States, Japan and Italy. These five countries represented 45% (or 17,241 experiences) of the total experiences reported. In 2023, the same countries made up the top 5 destinations.**

**Table 4**  
**Top 15 Destinations (All students) – 2024**

	Top 15 Destinations	Aggregate 2024	Average 2024	Median 2024
1	China	7,522	358	64
2	United Kingdom	3,244	154	80
3	United States	2,304	110	49
4	Japan	2,092	100	89
5	Italy	2,079	99	51
6	Indonesia	1,829	87	48
7	India	1,467	70	40
8	Korea (South)	1,295	62	38
9	Singapore	1,076	51	35
10	Malaysia	867	41	23
11	Vietnam	917	44	38
12	Canada	877	42	20
13	Germany	870	41	30
14	Multi Destination	859	41	0
15	Fiji	745	35	17

In 2024, 859 experiences were reported as "Multi-Destination" (ranked 14th most popular destination) which refers to students who spend half or less than half of their single Learning Abroad experience in any one destination. The majority of these multi-destination experiences included visits to several countries in South East Asia (19%), Europe (56%) or students, who as part of their experience, travelled to several countries in different regions.

### Distribution by regions

The number of experiences undertaken in Europe and Northeast Asia grew in 2024 in comparison with 2023. Universities reported a decline in experiences undertaken in Southeast Asia.

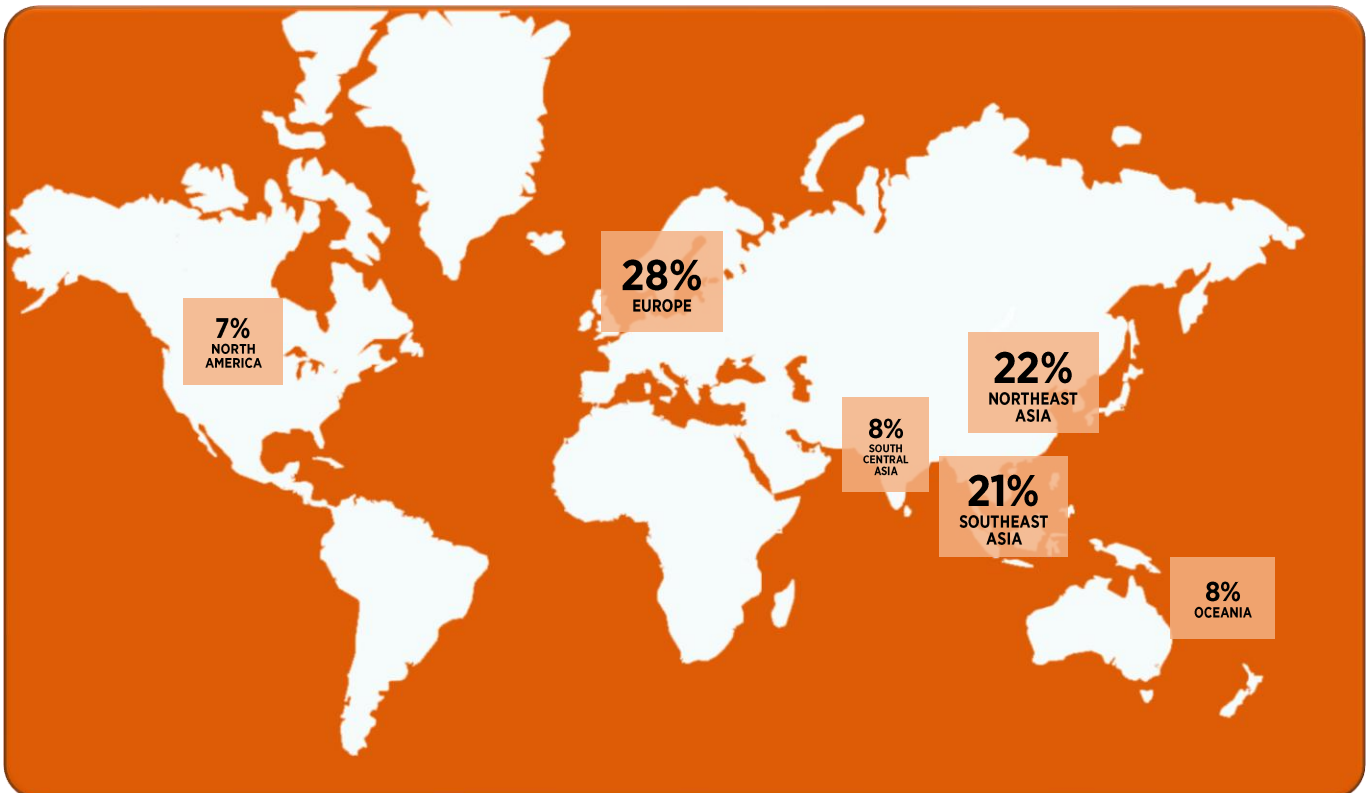
To offer a broader perspective on the destinations chosen by students participating in a Learning Abroad experience, we regrouped the destinations by nine regions.

Based on this analysis, universities on average reported the following regions as the most popular in 2024:

1. **Europe** (28% of the total in 2024 compared to 26% in 2023).
2. **Northeast Asia** (22% of the total in 2024 compared to 18% in 2023).
3. **Southeast Asia** (21% of the total in 2024 compared to 28% in 2023).

**Northeast Asia** reported the largest growth in 2024 and now attracts 22% of Learning Abroad participation. The percentage of total experiences undertaken in **Southeast Asia** dropped to 21% of experiences in 2024, from 28% in 2023.

**Chart 6**  
Average distribution by regions - 2024



**Table 5**  
**Percentage of destinations by regions (All students) – 2024**

Destinations by Region		Average 2024	Median 2024
1	Europe	28%	28%
2	Latin America	1%	0%
3	Middle East/North Africa	0%	0%
4	North America	7%	6%
5	North-East Asia	22%	22%
6	Oceania	8%	6%
7	South East Asia	21%	20%
8	South/Central Asia	8%	5%
9	Sub Saharan Africa	2%	1%
10	Multi-Destination	2%	0%
11	Other or unknown	1%	0%



## 2.2. Type of experiences

In 2024, on average, 34% of students participated in a faculty-led study tour in 2024 and 20% undertook an internship, work-integrated learning (WIL) or other practical placement or project.

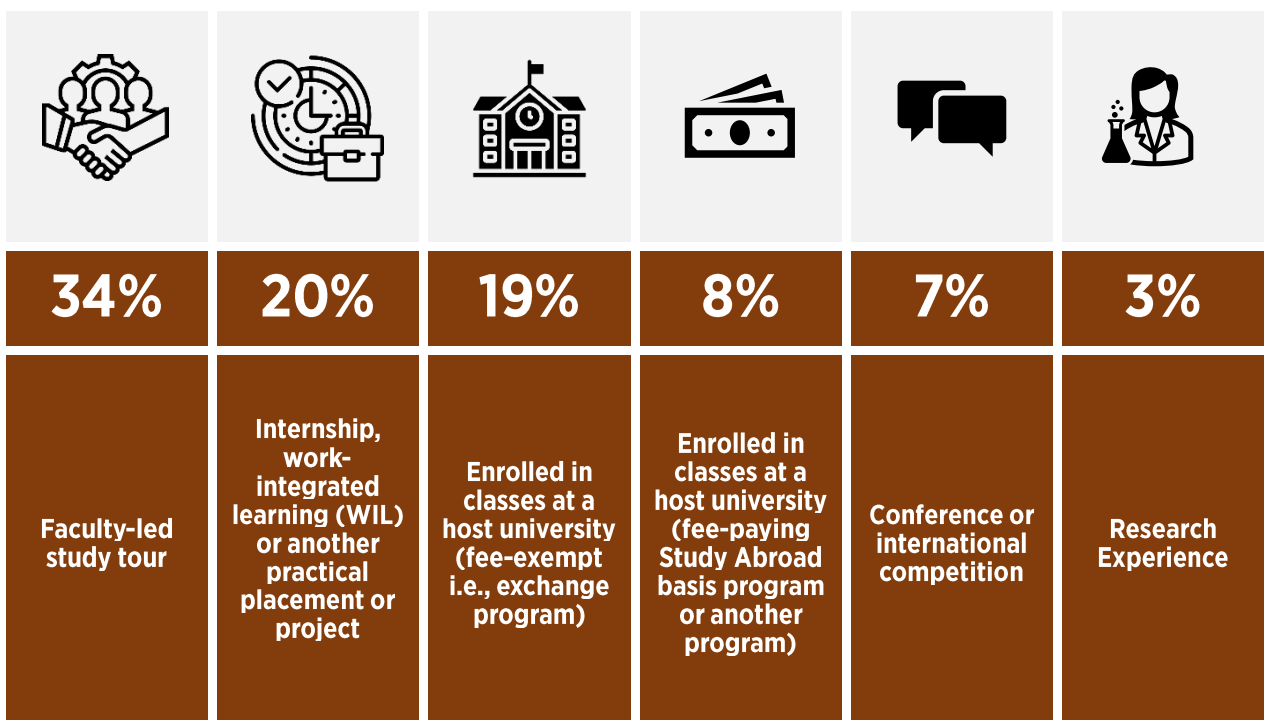
In comparison, in 2023, 38% of students participated in a faculty-led study tour and 19% enrolled in classes at a host university (i.e., exchange program).

All twenty-one participating Australian universities reported the type of experience that students chose in 2024. Categories were derived from areas of activity often grouped by practitioners, and with reference to international data.

On average, students participated in the following top experiences:

1. Faculty-led study tour (34%).
2. Internship, work-integrated learning (WIL) or other practical placement or project (20%).
3. Enrolled classes at a host university (fee-exempt at the host university i.e., exchange program) (19%).
4. Enrolled classes at a host university (fee-paying Study Abroad basis program or other program) (8%).
5. Conference or international competition (7%).
6. Research experience (3%).

Chart 7  
Average distribution by type of experience - Top 6 - 2024



**Table 6**  
**Percentage of students by experience type (All students) - 2024**

<b>Experience Type %</b>		<b>Average 2024</b>	<b>Median 2024</b>
<b>1</b>	Enrolled classes at a host university (fee-exempt at the host university i.e. exchange program)	<b>19%</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>2</b>	Enrolled classes at a host university (fee-paying Study Abroad basis program or another program)	<b>8%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>3</b>	Enrolled classes at an overseas campus of the home university (Exchange basis or other)	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>4</b>	Conference or international competition	<b>7%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>5</b>	Coursework dual degree	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>6</b>	Faculty-led study tour	<b>34%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>7</b>	Internship, work-integrated learning (WIL) or another practical placement or project	<b>20%</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>8</b>	Other study tour	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>9</b>	Research experience	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>10</b>	Volunteering, service learning or community engagement experience	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>11</b>	Other	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 2.3. Delivery mode

**On average, face-to-face experiences made up 95% of the Learning Abroad experiences undertaken in 2024.**

**The percentage of Learning Abroad experiences with an international perspective conducted via virtual channels however dropped in 2024 from an average of 5% in 2023 to 4% in 2024.**

In 2024, universities reported that an aggregate of 95% of experiences were conducted face-to-face (91% in 2023) and 4% were conducted virtually (8% in 2023).

**Table 7**  
**Percentage of students by experience type (All students) - 2024**

Delivery Mode	Aggregate 2024	Average 2024	Median 2024
Face-to-Face	95%	95%	98%
Virtually	4%	4%	1%
Multi-mode (Face to face and virtually)	0%	0%	0%
Unknown	1%	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Face-to-face Learning Abroad experiences were the most popular in 2024 with an average of 95% and a median of 98%.** Learning Abroad experiences offered virtually represented an average of 4% in 2024 with the median value reported as 1%. At one university, almost a third of Learning Abroad experiences took place virtually.

## 2.4. Duration of experiences

Universities reported a significant preference for short-term duration experiences with an average of 81% in 2024.

To provide an in-depth analysis on the type of programs that students undertook abroad, we requested universities to separate their numbers based on the duration of each Learning Abroad experience.

In 2024, the twenty-one universities reported the duration of 38,607 undergraduate, postgraduate and research Learning Abroad experiences of which:

- 31,355 experiences or 81% in aggregate were **short-term experiences** (up from 70% reported in 2023).
- 6,505 experiences or 17% in aggregate were **medium-length experiences** (down from 24% reported in 2023).
- 617 experiences or 2% in aggregate were **long-term experiences** (down from 5% reported in 2023).

**Table 8**  
Duration of Learning Abroad experiences (%) – All students - 2024

Duration	Aggregate 2024	Average 2024	Median 2024
<b>SHORT-TERM</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>85%</b>
Less than Two Weeks	19%	19%	21%
Two to Three Weeks	44%	45%	43%
Four Weeks	7%	7%	5%
Between Five and Nine Weeks	8%	7%	6%
Between Ten and Twelve Weeks	2%	2%	0%
<b>MEDIUM (One Trimester or Semester)</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>LONG (One year or more)</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>DO NOT KNOW</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

# 3. STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

**In this section, we provide an analysis of student demographics data related to participation in Learning Abroad initiatives.**

We delve into the participation rates of domestic and international students, examine the gender distribution among participants in various experiences, and identify the representation of indigenous students in international programs.

Additionally, we provide a detailed analysis of the top fields of study that constitute Learning Abroad experiences.



### 3.1. Participation by gender

**On average in 2024, all twenty-one universities reported that 65% of students participating in Learning Abroad experiences were women.**

**In aggregate, universities reported more women participating in Learning Abroad in 2024.** From the 38,608 experiences reported, 23,233 experiences or 60% in aggregate were undertaken by women. In 2024, the average for women was 65% and the median was 61% (a 62% average and median were reported in 2023).

Men accounted for 15,196 experiences or 39% in aggregate. In 2024, the average for men was 35% and the median was 39% (a 37% average and 38% median were reported in 2023).

Non-binary/gender-diverse students were reported to have participated in 74 Learning Abroad experiences or 0.2% on average in 2024 (0.3% in 2023).

**Table 9**  
**Distribution of students in Learning Abroad by Gender - 2024**

Gender %	Aggregate 2024	Average 2024	Median 2024
Woman	60.2%	64.6%	61.1%
Man	39.4%	34.9%	38.9%
Non-binary / gender diverse	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Don't Know	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 3.2. Participation by field of study

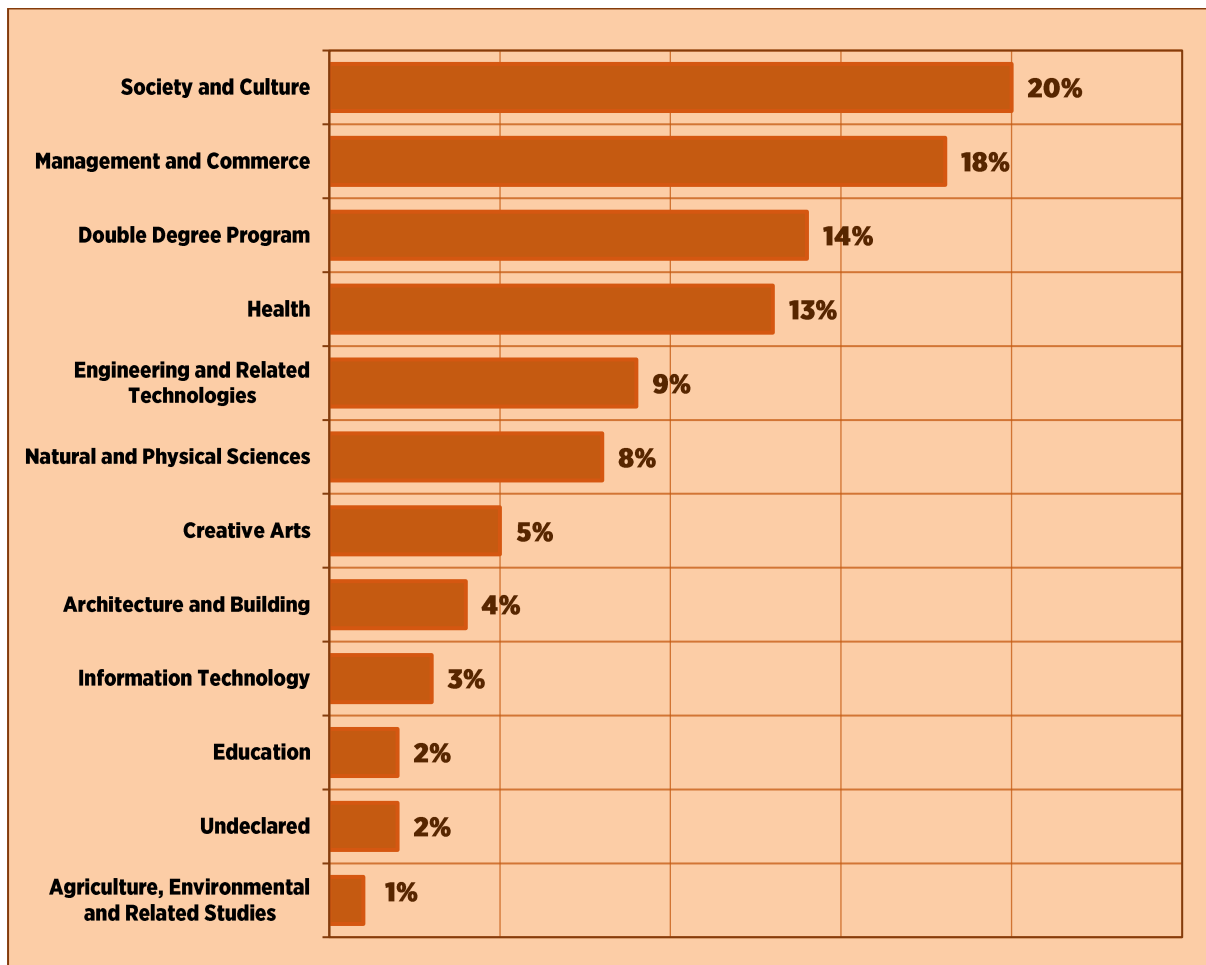
In 2024, universities reported a more even distribution of Learning Abroad experiences based on broad field of study. In aggregate, 20% of students participating in Learning Abroad experiences were enrolled in Society and Culture programs (17% in 2023) followed by 18% in Management and Commerce programs (18% in 2023).

All twenty-one universities reported on the fields of study for the 38,608 experiences reported in 2024.

In 2024, the top five fields of study for undergraduate and postgraduate students in order of popularity were Society and Culture (20%), Management and Commerce (18%), Double Degree Programs (14%), Health (13%) and Engineering (9%).

In comparison in 2023, the top fields of study for undergraduate and postgraduate students in order of popularity were Management and Commerce (18%), Society and Culture (17%), Health (11%) and Engineering (11%).

**Chart 12**  
**Distribution of experiences by field of study (Aggregate student participation - 2024)**



**Table 10**  
**Distribution of experiences by field of study – 2024**

Major Field of Study	Aggregate 2024	Average 2024	Median 2024
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	1%	3%	2%
Architecture and Building	4%	4%	1%
Creative Arts	5%	5%	5%
Double Degree Program	14%	10%	4%
Education	2%	3%	1%
Engineering and Related Technologies	9%	8%	7%
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	0%	0%	0%
Health	13%	19%	17%
Information Technology	3%	4%	2%
Management and Commerce	18%	13%	13%
Mixed Field Programmes	0%	1%	0%
Natural and Physical Sciences	8%	9%	6%
Other (please specify)	0%	0%	0%
Society and Culture	20%	16%	16%
Undeclared	2%	6%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Students enrolled in double degrees

From the total of 38,608 experiences reported in 2024, fifteen universities reported 5,579 experiences undertaken by students enrolled in double degree programs (4,903 experiences were reported by fourteen universities in 2023). As a result, we needed to conduct further analysis to categorise those by field of study.

From the 5,579 experiences undertaken by double degree students, the majority were enrolled in a Law double degree program (33%) or in Business (29%).

### 3.3. Participation of domestic and international students

**On average, international students participating in Learning Abroad experiences increased in 2024 and accounted for 27% of all experiences (15% in 2023).**

#### Domestic students

In aggregate in 2024, the twenty-one participating universities reported 63% of Learning Abroad experiences or 24,231 experiences were undertaken by domestic students. This compares to 70% or 21,446 experiences reported in 2023.

**On average, domestic students participating in a Learning Abroad experience accounted for 73% of all experiences in 2024 (85% in 2023). The median participation for domestic students was 73% in 2024 (88% in 2023).**

#### International students

In aggregate in 2024, the twenty-one participating universities reported 37% of Learning Abroad experiences or 14,372 experiences were undertaken by international students. This compares to 30% or 9,218 experiences reported in 2023 by twenty-three universities.

**On average, international students participating in a Learning Abroad experience accounted for 27% of all experiences in 2024 (15% in 2023). The median participation for international students was 27% in 2024 (12% in 2023).**

**Table 11**

**Distribution of Learning Abroad experiences (By student classification) – 2024**

Student classification	Aggregate 2024	Average 2024	Median 2024
Domestic students	63%	73%	73%
International students	37%	27%	27%
Other or unknown	0%	0%	0%
<b>TOTAL ALL PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 4.

# ROLE OF FUNDING, ACADEMIC CREDIT AND THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS

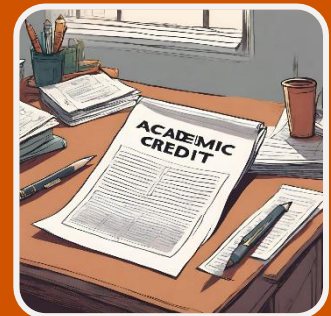
## FUNDING

This section includes an analysis of the levels of government, institutional and private funding to support participation in Learning Abroad.



## ACADEMIC CREDIT

We provide insights on whether credit was or wasn't awarded for participation in Learning Abroad experiences.



## THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS

In this section, we also explore the role of third-party providers in facilitating Australian university students' participation in Learning Abroad experiences.



## 4.1. Overall funding for Learning Abroad

Government and institutional funding to support participation in Learning Abroad experiences increased in 2024 compared to 2023.

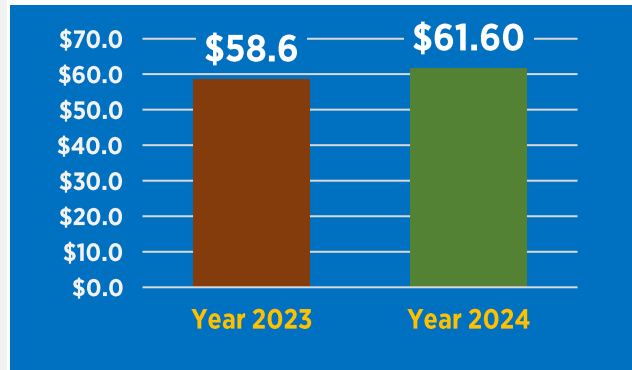
### Government Funding

All 21 participating universities reported the distribution of government funding for 11,798 Learning Abroad experiences in 2024.

The aggregate of government funding allocated to Learning Abroad experiences was 5% more than 2023 with an aggregate of \$61.6 million (\$58.6 million in 2023 as reported by 23 universities). From this total, 45% was OS-HELP (68% in 2023) and 53% New Colombo Plan Mobility grants (32% in 2023).

#### GOVERNMENT (aggregate amounts in \$millions)

5% more compared to 2023\*



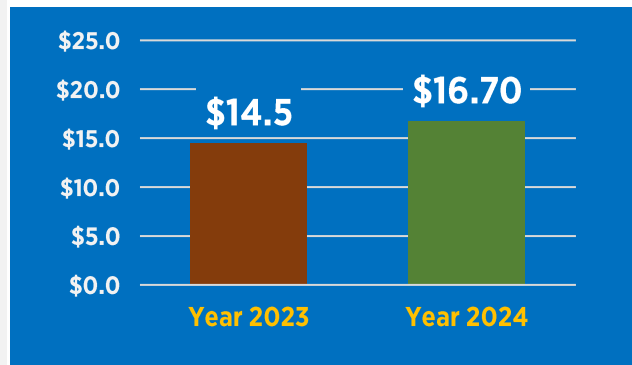
### Institutional Funding

All 21 participating universities reported the distribution of institutional funding for 9,171 Learning Abroad experiences in 2024 (7,297 experiences were reported in 2023 by 23 universities).

In aggregate, universities reported \$16.7 million (\$14.5 million in 2023) in institutional funding which represents 15% more the levels reported in 2023. However, three universities account for 57% of the total institutional funding offered in 2024.

#### INSTITUTIONAL (aggregate amounts in \$millions)

15% more compared to 2023\*



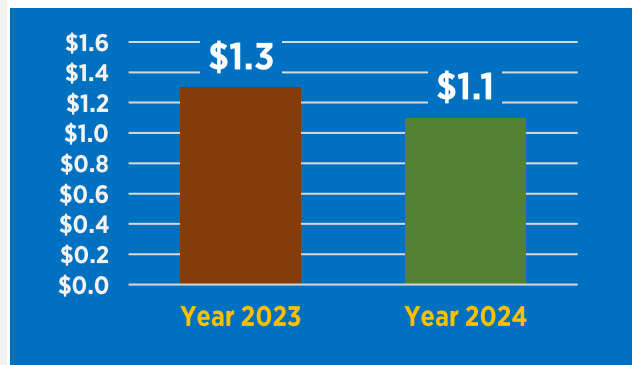
### External Funding

Universities also reported the level of funding from external organisations (corporate, NGOs, foreign governments, etc).

In comparison to 2023, the aggregate external funding is 17% lower.

#### EXTERNAL (aggregate amounts in \$millions)

17% less compared to 2023\*



NOTE: The figures for 2023 include data from twenty-three participants and 2024 twenty-one participants.

## 4.2. Extent of funding for Learning Abroad

**On average, 59% of Learning Abroad experiences received government, institutional, external or a combination of these types of funding in 2024.**

Funding for Learning Abroad experiences provides students with the financial means to access transformative global opportunities that enrich their education and personal growth. To understand the level of funding allocated and the type of students using this funding, this year we requested detailed information on the number of students receiving government, institutional and external funding to support their participation in Learning Abroad experiences.

Twenty participating universities reported the level of funding provided for 38,608 Learning Abroad experiences.

**In 2024, on average, 59% of Learning Abroad experiences received funding (compared to 59% in 2023), 26% of experiences received no funding and for 16% of experiences it was reported as unknown if funding was provided.**

**Table 12**  
**Percentage of funding by type – 2024**

Type of Funding	Average 2024
<b>No funding</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Yes funding (any type of funding)</b>	<b>59%</b>
↳ Yes, received university funding	23%
↳ Yes, received government funding	30%
↳ Yes, received funding from a private organisation	0%
↳ Yes, received a mix of university and government funding	6%
↳ Yes, received a combination of funding from various sources	0%
<b>Unknown</b>	<b>15%</b>

When we consider the average and median figures reported, the highest funding category was in fact those Learning Abroad experiences that received government funding with a reported average of 30% (24% median) followed by those experiences that received no funding with 26% (17% median) and 23% that received university funding (16% median).

### **4.3. Role of credit and non-credit experiences**

**Overall, the majority of Learning Abroad experiences are credited towards a degree, though they are not mandatory components of the program.**

The importance of providing academic credit to students undertaking Learning Abroad experiences has been a subject of ongoing debate and analysis among universities for many years. The twenty-one participating universities provided sufficient data to determine whether students receive credit and the type of credit for their participation in a Learning Abroad experience.

To gather additional data on this subject for 2024, we requested universities to report on the type of credit awarded (credit or non-credit) and whether the credit was a mandatory component of the student's degree or not.

For non-credit experiences, we also sought additional information to determine whether the non-credit experiences were for recognition and necessary for degree completion.

This additional information has been invaluable in comprehending the nature and challenges of Learning Abroad. This item offers a thorough examination of the information provided by the participating universities this year.

Overall, in 2024, 75% of Learning Abroad experiences were for credit (85% in 2023), however, only 17% were a mandatory component of the student's degree program (16% in 2023).

**The elective nature of Learning Abroad within the university experience underscores the need for sufficient resources to effectively promote these opportunities to students and explore the potential for integrating additional Learning Abroad experiences directly into degree programs.**



## Number of Learning Abroad experiences by credit status

Of the 38,608 Learning Abroad experiences reported in 2024 by the twenty-one universities, in aggregate, 75% of the experiences resulted in credit awarded to students. This compares to 85% of experiences reported as resulting credit in 2023.

Those experiences not resulting in credit being awarded accounted for 17% in aggregate in 2024 (14% in 2023). In 2024, 8% were reported as unknown (1% in 2023).

**Table 17**  
**Percentage of Learning experiences for credit – 2024**

Learning Abroad experiences for credit	Aggregate 2024	Average 2024	Median 2024
Yes	75%	80%	81%
No	17%	15%	13%
Unknown	8%	5%	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Credit status: Credit awarded or not awarded

**Only 17% of the Learning Abroad experiences were compulsory or for recognition to graduate (29% in 2023).**

To enrich our understanding of the role of credit or non-credit experiences, we requested universities to report on the type of credit awarded (credit or non-credit) and whether the credit was a mandatory component of the student’s degree in 2024.

#### Universities provided this additional information based on the following sub-categories:

- A. Credit awarded (compulsory)** – academic credit was granted for the experience, with participation a compulsory requirement for graduation.
- B. Credit awarded (not compulsory)** – academic credit was granted for the experience; however, participation was not a compulsory requirement for graduation.
- C. No credit awarded (for recognition)** – part of the degree program such as a practical placement or internship, which is a graduation requirement, but no credit is awarded. Includes 0 (zero) credit point units of study.
- D. No credit awarded (not for recognition)** – no academic credit was awarded, and the experience was not required for graduation. For example, an experience that is not a graduation requirement but receives formal recognition through an official mechanism, such as AHEGS or other means.

On average in 2024, **56% of Learning Abroad experiences were awarded non-compulsory credit** meaning that students were not obliged to undertake a Learning Abroad experience however, they did receive credit if they completed an experience (55% in 2023).

**For the non-credit experiences, on average, 7% of experiences were reported as not for recognition in 2024 (6% in 2023).** This means that on average, 63% of Learning Abroad experiences were an optional component of the study experience for university students (a combination of both credit awarded (not compulsory) and no credit awarded (not for recognition)).

Some universities reported limitations in reporting on the classification of experiences for this item and as a result, the credit status for an average of 12% of experiences were reported as unknown on average.

63% - Elective experiences		25% - Mandatory experiences		12% - Unknown
<b>56%</b> Credit not compulsory	<b>7%</b> Non-Credit and not for recognition	<b>19%</b> Credit compulsory	<b>6%</b> Non-Credit for recognition	<b>12%</b> Unknown
<b>EXPERIENCES THAT STUDENTS WANTED TO UNDERTAKE</b> These strategies are resource intensive because it requires the promotion and conversion of students.		<b>EXPERIENCES THAT STUDENTS HAD TO UNDERTAKE</b> These strategies are driven by academic outcomes and integrated to the student study program.		

Chart 17

Average distribution of Learning Experiences by type of credit  
(Compulsory, not compulsory, for recognition or no recognition) – 2024



**Table 18**  
**Percentage of Learning Abroad experiences for credit – 2024**

Type of credit awarded	Aggregate 2024	Average 2024	Median 2024
Credit awarded (compulsory)	11%	19%	7%
Credit awarded (not compulsory)	57%	56%	66%
No credit awarded (for recognition)	6%	6%	1%
No credit awarded (not for recognition)	8%	7%	6%
Unknown	19%	12%	3%

## 5.

# ACCESS AND EQUITY IN LEARNING ABROAD

The Australian Strategy for International Education 2021–2030 highlights the importance of connecting Australian students with the world through Learning Abroad opportunities.

This section explores the participation in Learning Abroad of students in under-represented groups with the aim of developing policies and experiences to ensure all students, regardless of background, their chosen education institution or academic discipline, can access Learning Abroad opportunities.



## 5.1. Student participation (access and equity categories)

Participation of various students in access and equity categories has increased since the pandemic however, but there is still some way to go to reach 2019 levels.

This section required universities to provide student participation data in Learning Abroad experiences (delivered face-to-face, virtually and via multi-modes) for various access and equity categories as outlined in the table below.

Please note that more than one access and equity category may apply to an individual Learning Abroad experience and in these instances, the individual experience was counted in each applicable category.

Twenty-one universities provided data on the number of domestic Learning Abroad students who participated in a Learning Abroad program in 2024.

**The aggregate data suggests a growth in participation of students in various equity groups compared to data reported in 2023 however, there is still some growth necessary to reach 2019 levels.**

**A notable increase is that of students with a disability which is close to the number of students participating in 2019.**

**Table 21**  
**Aggregate student participation in Learning Abroad by category (Domestic students only)**

Student category	Aggregate 2019 (N=34)	Aggregate 2023 (N=23)	Aggregate 2024 (N=21)	Difference 2023 to 2024
A. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.	461	280	<b>414</b>	<b>48%</b>
B. First in family to university.	9,746	4,321	<b>4,662</b>	<b>8%</b>
C. Low Socio-Economic Status (SES).	3,779	1,557	<b>1,658</b>	<b>6%</b>
D. Located in regional or remote areas.	5,161	1,685	<b>2,582</b>	<b>53%</b>
E. Students with a disability.	2,432	2,382	<b>2,533</b>	<b>6%</b>

n = number of universities reporting this item

### Supporting Access and Equity

Learning Abroad can have a profound impact on students from equity groups by providing access to new opportunities, fostering personal growth, and enhancing academic success. This year, participating universities demonstrated their commitment to supporting students from equity groups in accessing Learning Abroad experiences. An important example is the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. On average, 19% of the graduating cohort in 2024 were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who participated in a Learning Abroad experience (as reported by twenty universities). This compares to 20% reported in 2019.

## 5.2. Participation rate (access and equity categories)

To provide additional perspective and a better comparison of the participation of these student cohorts, we explore the participation rate based on the graduating number of students for each student group.

Please note that not every participating university was able to provide sufficient information for this item.

**Table 22**

### **Participation rate in Learning Abroad on the graduating number of students for each student group (Domestic students only)**

<b>Student category</b>	<b>Aggregate 2024</b>	<b>Average 2024</b>	<b>Median 2024</b>
<b>A.</b> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.	<b>19%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>B.</b> First in family to university.	<b>15%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>C.</b> Low Socio-Economic Status (SES).	<b>12%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>D.</b> Located in regional or remote areas.	<b>12%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>E.</b> Students with a disability.	<b>17%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>11%</b>

# APPENDIX 1. DEFINITIONS

## DELIVERY MODE

**Face-to-face experiences:** When the student travels to another country to participate in the learning experience.

**Virtual experiences:** When the learning experience is delivered primarily through online/digital channels.

This includes enrolling to take classes virtually at a host on an exchange or study abroad basis; undertaking virtual faculty-led collaborative activities with a host (e.g., 'Collaborative Online International Learning') such as project-based learning, one-on-one or small-group language learning practice, videoconference dialogues, courses paired across institutions who work together; undertaking virtual internships, work integrated learning (WIL) or other placement or projects (e.g., group consulting projects for companies located abroad), or virtual volunteer or service learning or service-learning conducted online in collaboration with a community partner overseas.

**Multi-mode (Face to face and Virtually) experiences:** When the Learning Abroad experiences include both face-to-face and virtual components.

## DURATION OF EXPERIENCE

The duration of the experience was reported based on the period that the student was involved in the experience (excluding pre-departure preparation or post-return activities) and not on the number of contact hours the student had. If the experience was delivered virtually and with a flexible length, universities reported the duration based on the expected length of the experience to be completed.

## THIRD PARTY PROVIDERS

A third-party provider encompasses an external organisation used to provide services to students on behalf of the home institution (e.g., education or content delivery, program management or logistics, safety or wellbeing). It could be a non-profit organisation, a for-profit business, or a consortium.

It excludes travel management companies where these are predominantly used to support flight or accommodation bookings (as these functions are not typically a university function).

## TYPE OF CREDIT

**Credit awarded (compulsory)** – academic credit was granted for the experience, with participation a compulsory requirement for graduation.

**Credit awarded (not compulsory)** – academic credit was granted for the experience; however, participation was not a compulsory requirement for graduation.

**No credit awarded (for recognition)** – part of the degree program such as a practical placement or internship, which is a graduation requirement, but no credit is awarded. Includes 0 (zero) credit point units of study.

**No credit awarded (not for recognition)** – no academic credit was awarded, and the experience was not required for graduation. For example, an experience that is not a graduation requirement but receives formal recognition through an official mechanism, such as AHEGS or other means.

# 2024 Benchmark of Learning Abroad



**On behalf of the Australian Universities International Directors' Forum (AUIDF) and Studymove Pty Ltd, we want to express our gratitude to the twenty-one Australian universities for their valuable contributions and collaboration in this significant research effort.**

## **AUIDF**

In the early 2000's international engagement at Australian universities, outside the well-understood research contribution, was growing rapidly, however, not all universities were in a position to provide the support to professionalise these activities and yet support was needed. The Australian Universities International Directors' Forum (AUIDF) was established in 2002 to meet these needs.

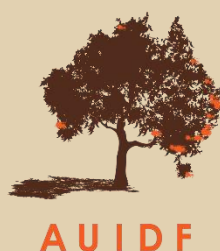
The AUIDF provides a platform for enhanced professionalism, cooperation and cohesion amongst university professionals leading their university's international engagement activities. It is member led and has evolved significantly since 2002. Through member contributions, the AUIDF enables research consultancies, sector benchmarking, staff development opportunities and a coordinated and enhanced Australian presence at key international education conferences.

## **Studymove Pty Ltd**

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AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORS' FORUM



**This report was prepared by Keri Ramirez and Dimity Huckel at Studymove Pty Ltd. Please contact us if you have a question or require additional information about this report.**

**STUDYMOVE PTY LTD**

**Email: [benchmark@studymove.com](mailto:benchmark@studymove.com)**

**Web: [www.studymove.com](http://www.studymove.com)**

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