

GREAT SERVICES

TOP NOTCH

SUPERFINE

SUPERB

I AM HAPPY

HIGH QUALITY

EXCELLENT

IMPRESSIVE

FIVE STARS

PERFECTLY

VERY GOOD



**DELIVERING ON  
THE STUDENT  
EXPERIENCE:  
OUTCOMES OF  
THE 2018 ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE  
BAROMETER**



QUALITY | SUPPORT | ASSURANCE 



**Australian Government**

**Department of Education and Training**

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2018 has brought increased challenges for the Australian ELICOS sector. Challenges like the market's increasing volatility and intensifying global competition mean English language colleges need to better respond to their students. Students can be our strongest advocates or our biggest detractors. If their study experience in Australia is positive then they will become our strongest advocates. But what makes a positive experience for our students?

The English Language Barometer (ELB) offers institutions a way of finding out what matters most to their students and English language students more broadly. In 2018, 60 colleges participated in the survey so that we now have a deeper understanding of what matters to students. From their arrival experience to their learning experience, students have spoken on where Australian colleges are doing well and where they need to improve.

Yet, the ELB covers so many facets of a student's experience that it can be difficult for a college to decide what to focus on. Will focusing on a student's homestay lead to a stronger student experience than reinventing an orientation program, for instance.

This Best Practice Guide offers some insight into where a college can direct their efforts. It explores the successful programs and activities of colleges that have achieved significant results in the ELB and analyses the critical areas of the student experience that matter most.

I hope that it gives your college some great ideas on how it can improve your students' experience. I think it will reinforce much of what you are already doing, and our national ELB results show that what we are doing is working but with our ever increasing challenges, we need to push that little bit further.



Brett Blacker  
CEO  
English Australia



# CONTENTS

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Executive Summary.....	5
1. Chapter 1: Arrival.....	9
2. Chapter 2: Living.....	18
3. Chapter 3: Learning.....	29
4. Chapter 4: Support.....	41
5. Chapter 5: Further suggestions and resources.....	52
6. Chapter 6: Survey demographics.....	56
7. Appendix A: Colleges participating in 2017/18 ELB.....	59
8. Appendix B: Navitas centre evaluations action plan.....	61
9. Appendix C: Evaluate your culture of support.....	65

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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## Purpose of the ELB

The purpose of the ELB is to provide an analysis of international student perceptions, attitudes and experiences in English language colleges in Australia and compare these with survey data from previous iterations.

## Overview of the research

Since 2005 i-graduate, through the International Student Barometer (ISB) and English Language Barometer (ELB), has tracked and reported feedback from over 3 million international students worldwide. The ISB and ELB offer an independent and confidential student feedback process for education providers, tracking the decision-making, perceptions and experiences of students studying outside their home country. The surveys cover six main areas:

1. enquiry and application process
2. arrival and orientation
3. learning experience
4. living experience
5. support services
6. recommendation of the overall experience

From the ELB data in this report, it is clear that ELICOS providers are doing very well in terms of providing a positive experience for their students in Australia, that this is continuing to improve over time, and that what we are doing is generally on par with, and in many cases exceeding, the experience offered by English language providers in other countries.

A great deal can be learned from language centres that have recorded high satisfaction scores in the survey. This section reports on the good practices identified in seven Australian ELICOS colleges that excelled in different areas of the survey. The case studies are followed by some general suggestions and resources for those looking to further

improve the experience they offer their students.

## Objectives

The 2017/18 study has the following overarching objectives, developed and aligned to assist the sector to meet and surpass ESOS and National Code requirements, including the ELICOS National Standards. These standards meet or surpass international practice and industry standards in this global industry.

- Provide an overview of the characteristics of international students studying ELICOS in Australia.
- Provide an evidence base of international student satisfaction levels in the living and support environments to help improve the consistency and quality of ELT provision across the sector.
- Provide an evidence base of international student satisfaction with education experiences and outcomes to improve the consistency and quality of ELT provision across the sector.
- Provide information to inform the development of local, national and international strategies for the welfare of international students on ELICOS programs in Australia, including data relevant to international students' experience with employment, accommodation and local travel.
- Provide market intelligence and information on the student decision making process to support the recruitment strategies of the ELICOS sector and contribute to Australia gaining increased global market share of students choosing to learn English overseas.
- Provide students with a mechanism for sharing their thoughts, expectations and subsequent satisfaction levels on their student experience both inside and outside the classroom, acknowledging the importance of interaction with Australian students

and communities in the journey towards employment in an English language environment.

- Provide institutions with an opportunity to listen and respond to the student voice, enabling better understanding of ELT successes and improvement opportunities.
- Provide a consistent approach to evaluation and monitoring for the benefit of students and a broad range of stakeholders.

### Key features of good practice

Overall, a number of aspects were common to many colleges described in the case studies.

#### 1. Programs, approaches and initiatives are appropriate for the students and the context of study.

Whether the college is large or small, based in a city or a regional area, private or part of a public institution, teaching General English or EAP, efforts have been made to ensure the services, curriculum, support and staffing meet the needs of the students within its institutional setting, making the best use of available resources.

#### 2. Leadership by management is crucial

College managers and administrators see the student experience as important outside as well as inside the classroom. Systems and processes are set up to support a positive student experience, including regular strategic planning and appropriate and adequate evaluation and review of what is offered, and all involved with the college, including agents, have a clear understanding of their role in ensuring a positive experience. This support by upper management is the foundation of a successful student experience.

#### 3. There is a strong organisational culture of giving students a positive experience

Taking a lead from management, all staff and service providers associated with the college treat students with empathy and understanding. A willingness to connect and engage with students and meet their needs is evident in the college environment (i.e. the physical space), the curriculum as well as through interpersonal interaction.

#### 4. Sufficient resources are allocated for programs and support

Those directly responsible for implementing college programs and initiatives have access to funding, personnel and space that can contribute to student support and satisfaction. Management, teaching and support staff are skilled and empathetic, and have access to training and professional development relevant to their roles along with opportunities to engage with staff in other colleges.

#### 5. The opinions of students and staff are sought and valued

Regular student feedback is carried out and the outcomes are fed into the strategic planning process. Staff and/or student representation in planning at all levels provides useful insights, and leads to innovation.

#### 6. Communication is clear and appropriate

The college uses a range of media to ensure students have access to the information and support they need. Material is easily accessible to all students, offered in language that students can understand (and may include the students' first language), kept up to date and not excessive.

### 7. The college has a network of useful organisations and contacts

The college has identified individuals and organisations within and outside its own institution that have services, activities or facilities to complement its own offerings and provide a more complete student experience. These may range from accommodation and counselling services to government bodies and NGOs to local businesses. This feature is particularly useful for smaller colleges with limited resources. Relationships with these networks are highly valued and continuously nurtured and developed.

### Considerations when analysing the ELB

#### Centre Summary Sheets

**Satisfaction scores** – aim to achieve the average score of relevant benchmarks, whether that is a national benchmark (Australian average), university language centres (for example) or centres in regional or metropolitan areas.

**Ranking positions** - these are based not only on satisfaction scores, but also on the distribution of satisfaction scores between satisfied or very satisfied, and dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. A good satisfaction score but a low ranking position means that more of your respondents are satisfied rather than very satisfied, or very dissatisfied rather than simply dissatisfied.

In both cases, two courses of action are recommended.

1. Undertaken formal or informal consultation with students (e.g. focus groups) to understand issues arising from any element of their experience that falls below levels you are comfortable with.
  2. Liaise with other centres to identify good or best practice in areas where the satisfaction levels of your students fall below levels you are comfortable with.
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# CHAPTER 1:

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## ARRIVAL

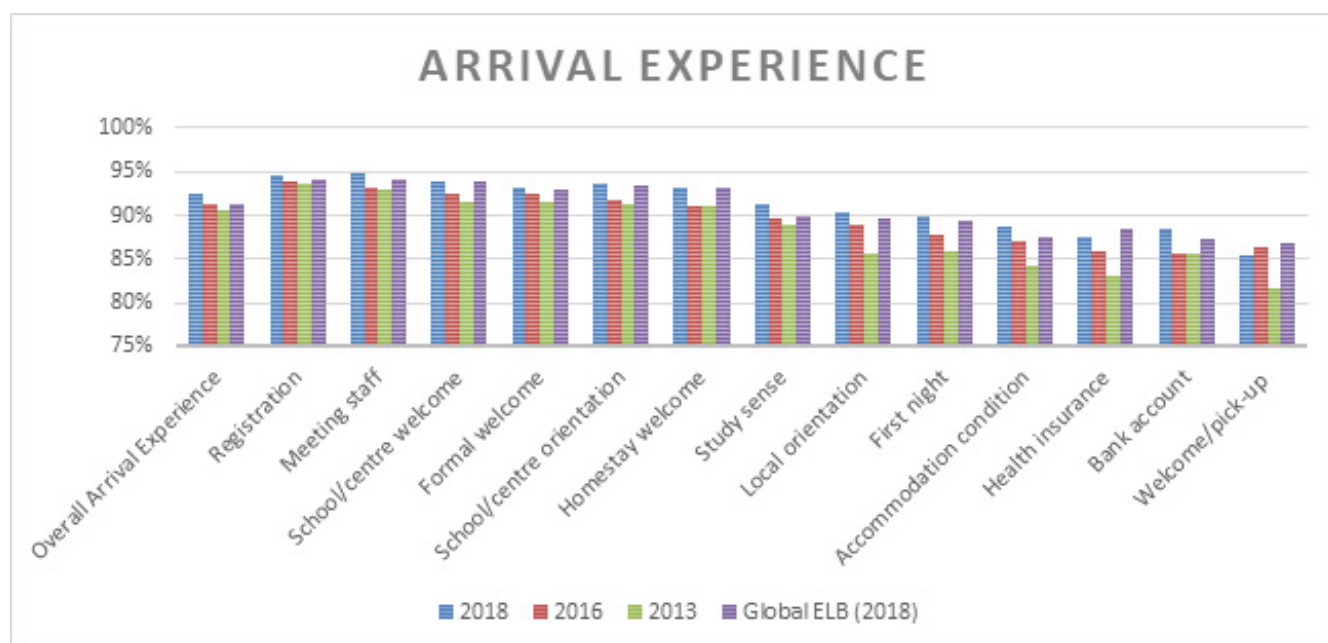
## Arrival overview

- The Overall Arrival Experience (Section 3.1) continues to improve (92.5%) with significant improvements in the First Night, Homestay Welcome and Bank Account ratings.
- Arrival Experience: Welcome/Pick Up and Health Insurance have shown an improvement but are still below the Global ELB.
- Arrival Overall was introduced as a new measure in 2013 and, despite measuring above the Global ELB in 2016, has increased from 92% to 93%.

## Arrival ELB results

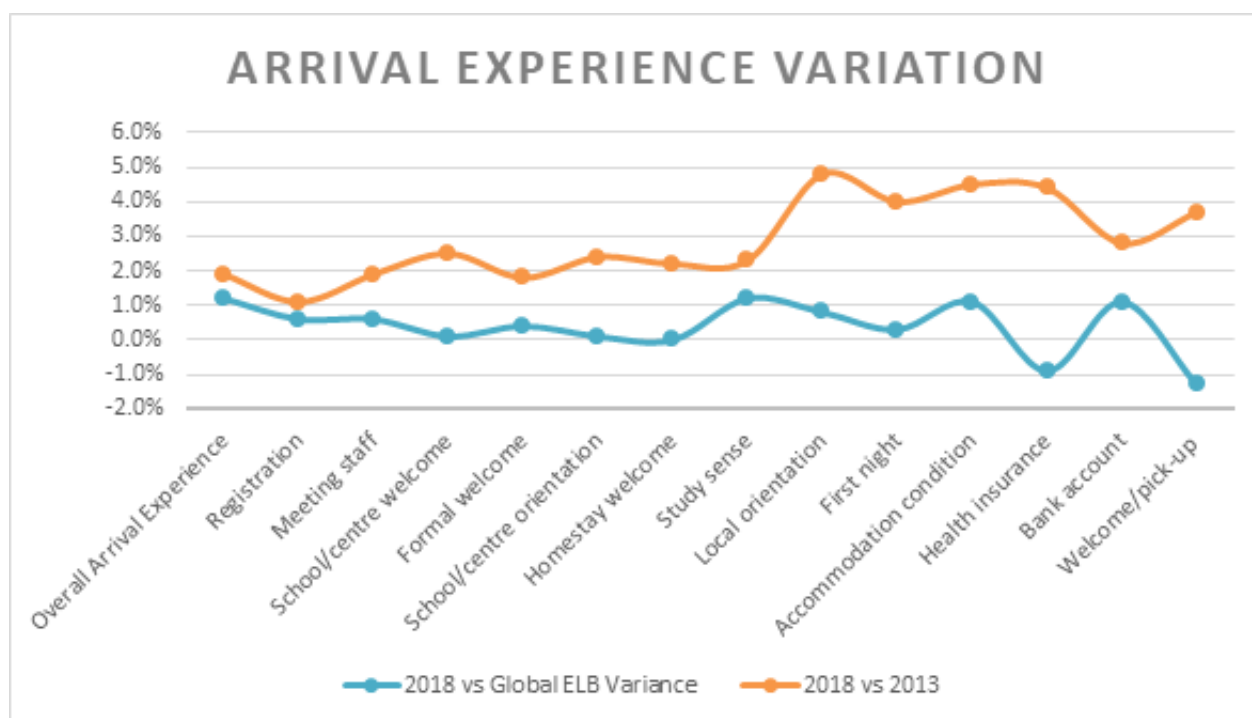
The Arrival Satisfaction ratings investigate the students experience from being greeted at the airport/train or coach station through to their orientation at their language school.

### Arrival Experience: Percentage of Positive/Supporting Responses



The table above shows an overall improvement in 2018 in most Arrival components compared with 2016, 2013 and the Global ELB outcomes.

## Arrival Experience: Variation Compared to 2013 and Global ELB

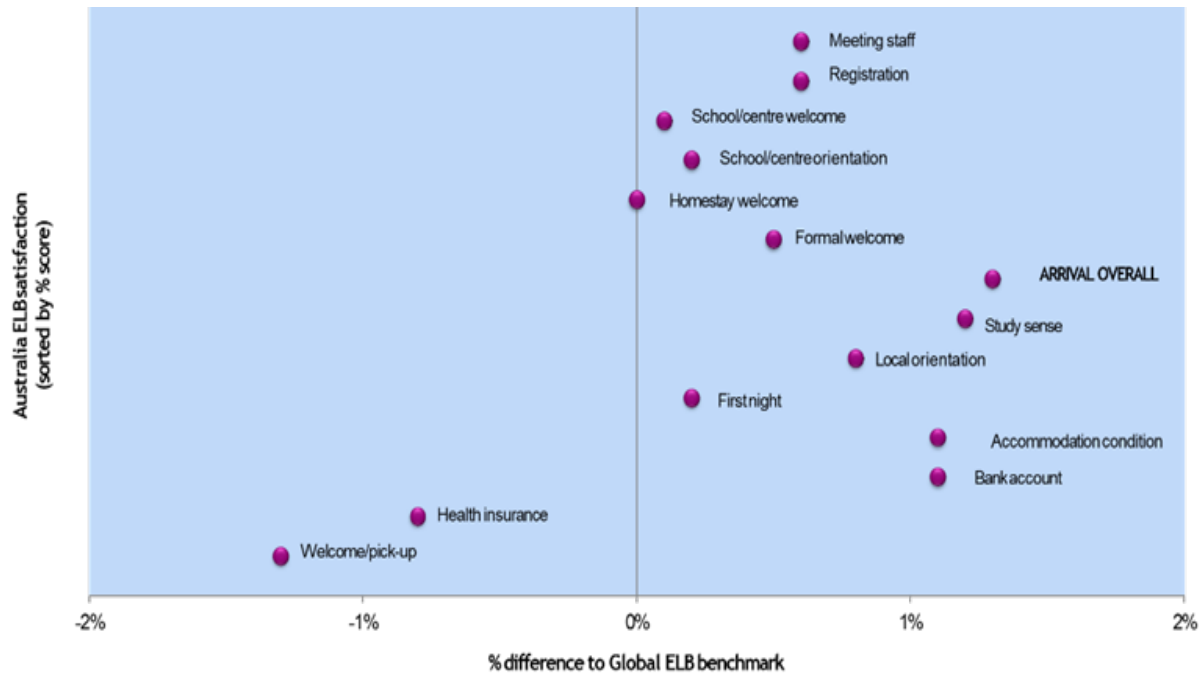


The 2018 vs Global ELB Variance line indicates that in almost all categories, the Australian Arrival experience is slightly above the Global ELB rating, with Health Insurance and the Welcome/Pick Up experience slightly below. In previous years, Accommodation Condition was below the Global ELB, however this is an area where results are now significantly better than the Global score.

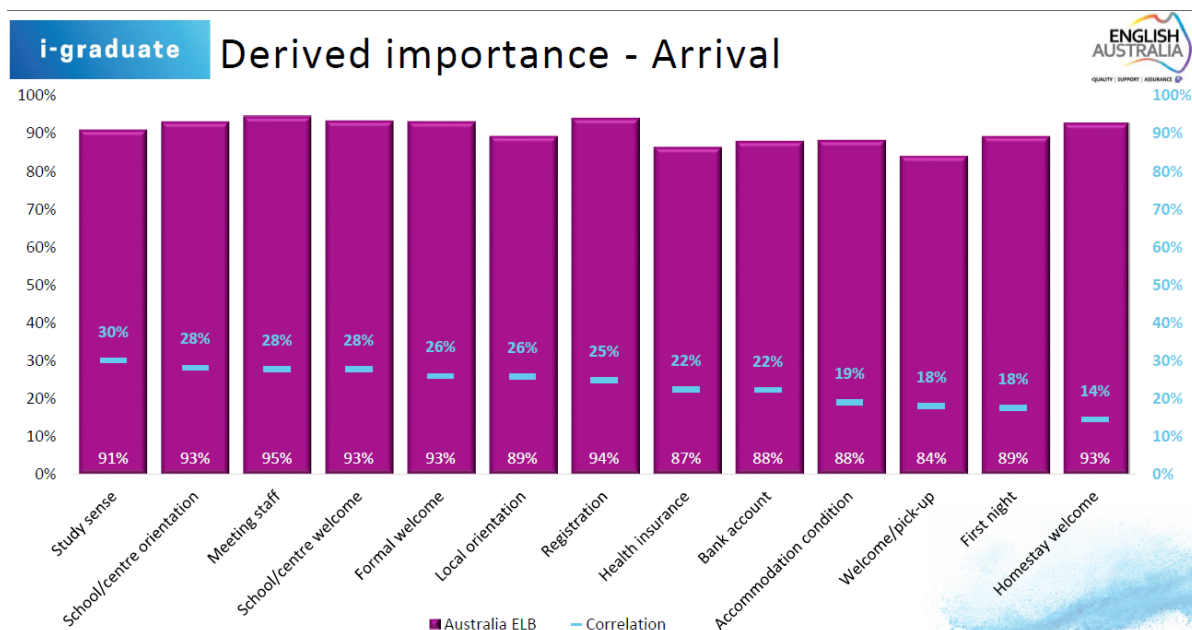
The 2018 vs 2013 line shows the percentage change in each of the elements. All categories have improved since the measures were introduced, with notable improvement in areas that were previously underperforming such as Local Orientation, First Night, Accommodation Condition, Health Insurance, Bank Account and Welcome/Pick Up. This is strong indication that the activities undertaken to improve the student experience in these areas are effective.

### Arrival Experience: Student Responses Compared to Global ELB

The graph below indicates possible areas for focus in the future, when compared with the Global ELB. Health Insurance and the Welcome Pickup are areas that could be reviewed to identify possibilities for improvement.



## Arrival analysis



What aspects of a student's arrival experience matter most? Focusing on the right areas is critical for any college looking to boost its ELB results. The above graph shows the areas that matter most to students. The higher the percentage in blue then the more significant that area is when students are evaluating their arrival experience. For instance, Study sense correlates at 30% compared with 14% for Homestay welcome meaning Study sense has a much greater impact on a student's arrival experience, Colleges can use this to determine what areas they should focus on for the most significant effect on a student's experience in Australia.

When evaluating your arrival results, four key areas stand out as crucial to a student's arrival experience:

- study sense
- school/centre orientation
- meeting staff
- school/centre welcome.

While the correlation results are only several percentage points higher than other areas, nonetheless it is these that stand out the most.

### Study sense

Understanding how my course of study would work. Students need to have a clear sense of what their study involves. How much time do they need to dedicate, what do they need to focus on, how does the college promote active engagement, how can students best manage their time are just some questions that students may need answered to gain a greater sense of their study burden and what their life in Australia will look like.

### School/centre orientation

A clear orientation so that the student understands where they can access all the things that they need will go a long way to improving a college's ELB score. Guides that outline the college's expectations and other aspects can work well here.

### Meeting staff

Introductions to the critical people that students need to know in the college are essential. This can make the student feel welcome and give them a clear sense of who to turn to if there are any problems.

### School/centre welcome

How you welcome students is critical to their arrival experience. How do you go about your in-take? How at ease are students made to feel during this and orientation?

## Case Study: University of Adelaide College

**Location: Adelaide CBD**

**Size: Medium (150-499 students)**

**Main ELT programs offered:**

- Academic English

**Areas of strength**

- Arrival
- Support
- Living

### Context

Looking at the 2016 ELB outcomes, management of Adelaide College, part of the Kaplan network, was concerned that it was not doing enough for students outside class time, and feedback from a NEAS Quality Review also pointed them in the direction of change. They subsequently developed and implemented a number of initiatives to ensure that students had a positive and balanced experience at the College.

The College was delighted with its ELB feedback. Although their sample size was small, just shy of the number required to gain a ranking, 100% of respondents were satisfied with Support Overall and the Centre Director stated that responses represented a 'pleasing improvement' from the 2016 results.

### Out-of-class activities

The main focus of extra-curricular activities at the College is to ensure the students are able to build relationships with their peers, the university and the community. The activities are designed and led primarily by full-time teachers within their Award-specified hours, or by casual teachers as required.

### Groups

For each day there is a different option, such as a Conversation Group to practice speaking or an Everyday English Group to help students with finding a job or a new place to live. A Homework Group was set up when the college found that many students had no appropriate space off-campus where they could complete their homework: in this well-attended option, students can take their homework to a teacher-supervised study room where they can work quietly and access help if necessary.

### Excursions

As well as the Groups, the college offers regular excursions that balance fun with a more academic focus. For example, students may go to the beach or a nature park or go bowling, but they may also attend an event such as a university Science Fair or a presentation on Aboriginal food. The College pays entrance fees and organises free transport to out-of-the-way places. Excursions are accompanied by at least one teacher, depending on numbers, and have been consistently well-attended since they were implemented.

### Learning Support

The College offers Learning Support classes following regular class time where teachers help students revise class content, review written assignments or prepare for

assessment. There are generally two of these one-hour classes every week. Students do not need to book for classes, however students who have been identified 'At Risk' can book to ensure a place.

### Social Club

The college Social Club is organised by a 4-5-member elected student committee and supervised by a college staff member. The emphasis is social and informal, and includes activities such as movie nights, special event parties such as Halloween, and fundraising morning teas. It also offers initiatives to support student mental health. The Social Club's Facebook page, which operates within the college social media policy, is very well-supported by students.

### 'Selling' the opportunities

The College has a multi-faceted approach to letting students know of the options available to them, as they feel this is key to encouraging participation. Events and opportunities are emailed directly to students via Moodle, the College's LMS, and teachers also mention upcoming events, reminding them of the benefits and actively encouraging participation. Having teachers involved in leading the Groups and activities also has a positive impact in terms of understanding the options available and ability to recommend these options for students.

### Arrival

All new Adelaide College students under the age of 18 are met at the airport by a contracted personalised taxi service, and other students can opt in for this service. The vehicles, known as 'limousines', are clean and modern and the drivers are personable and friendly with extensive experience in airport pickups for the College so are well-versed in allaying anxieties new arrivals may have. In the limousines, students are given an Arrival Guide to prepare them for their first days in their new city and their new study context.



*An excerpt from the University of Adelaide College Student Arrival Guide*

**Accommodation**

Adelaide College is proud of the high standard of its accommodation. A dedicated Accommodation Manager and a separate U18 support person work with a longstanding contracted provider who is very 'switched on' to the housing needs of their students and this partnership allows the College to have input into induction as well as the student customer experience. Because of the direct connection with the provider, students feel secure in their accommodation and are happy to let the College know if they are having any problems, which can then be promptly addressed.

**Collaboration with the university**

The college has a very positive relationship with its receiving institution, the University of Adelaide, a Group of Eight member which is keen to ensure students have a smooth transition to university and that they remain engaged in their studies. Engagement also helps minimise 'leakage', where students may change their enrolment to another university.

There are different forums for collaboration between the College and the university. Key to provision of student support is a Joint Operations Group which meets monthly to discuss issues relating to student support. There is stable university representation on this committee, and a positive alignment of mutual goals is leading to benefits for both parties.

There are frequent opportunities for students to take part in events organised by the university, and the College actively promotes these. There may be faculty orientation sessions to give students an idea of what to expect during their studies; a 'chemistry spectacular' with interested school students; or a visit to the nearby Waite campus where prospective viticulture students can learn more about their future course.

**Student input**

Adelaide College has recently set up a representative Student Liaison Group as a forum for two-way dialogue relating to programs and services at the college. Although only two meetings had taken place when college representatives were interviewed for this resource, the Centre Director was confident this direct engagement would have a positive impact on the student experience.

# CHAPTER 2:

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## LIVING

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## Living overview

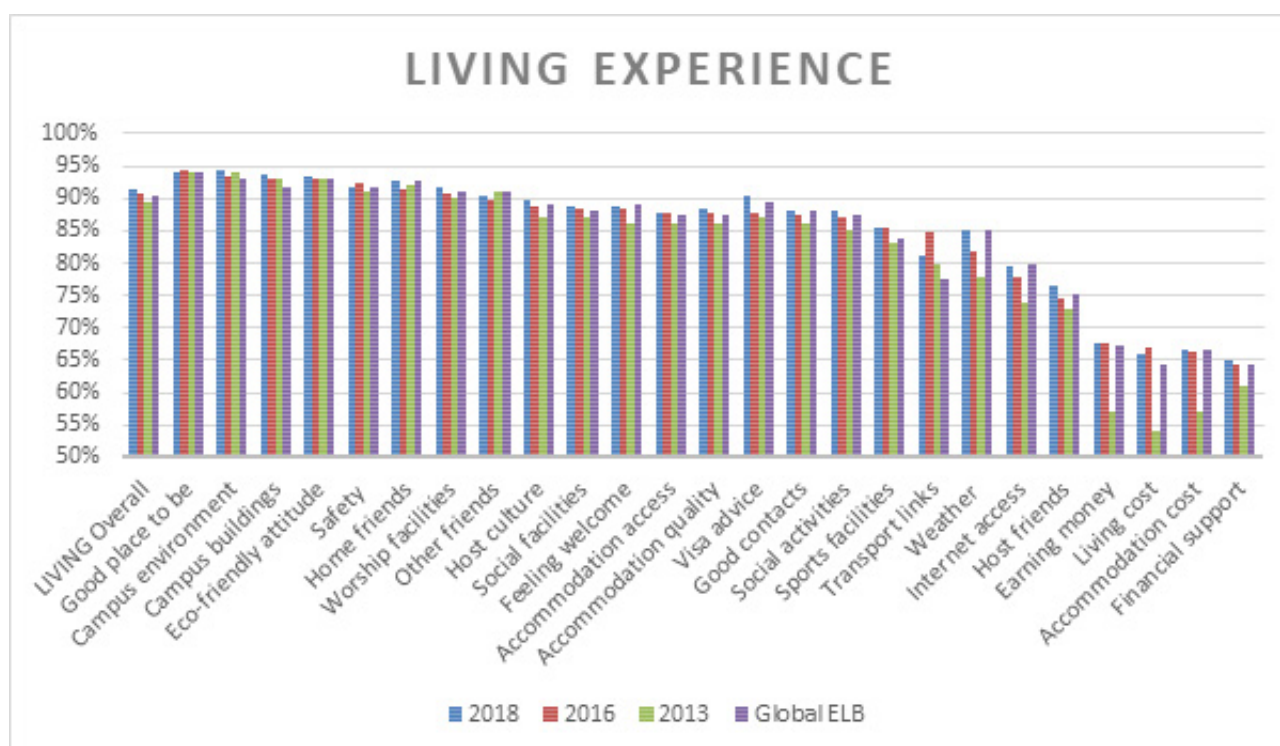
- Living Experience (Section 3.3) increased only marginally to 91.4% from previous years. Visa Advice and Weather both increased significantly.
- Living Experience: Transport is the only measure to decrease in the Living scores compared to previous years. Several scores sit below the Global ELB: Other Friends, Feeling Welcome and Internet Access. Safety in Public Spaces and Accommodation both decreased and, given its importance to ELICOS students, this is an area to review.

## Living ELB results

The Living Satisfaction ratings survey the students experience living in Australia. This covers the cultural, societal, climate and service aspects that the student has experienced.

### Living Experience: Percentage of Positive/Supporting Responses

The responses to questions about the Living Experience in Australia have improved since 2016 with the exception of Transport Links and Living Costs. Transport Links may require further investigation as this rating dropped by 3.5% since 2016. Living Costs changes are less significant with a drop of 1.2% between 2016 and 2018. Despite this, the overall improvements are positive.

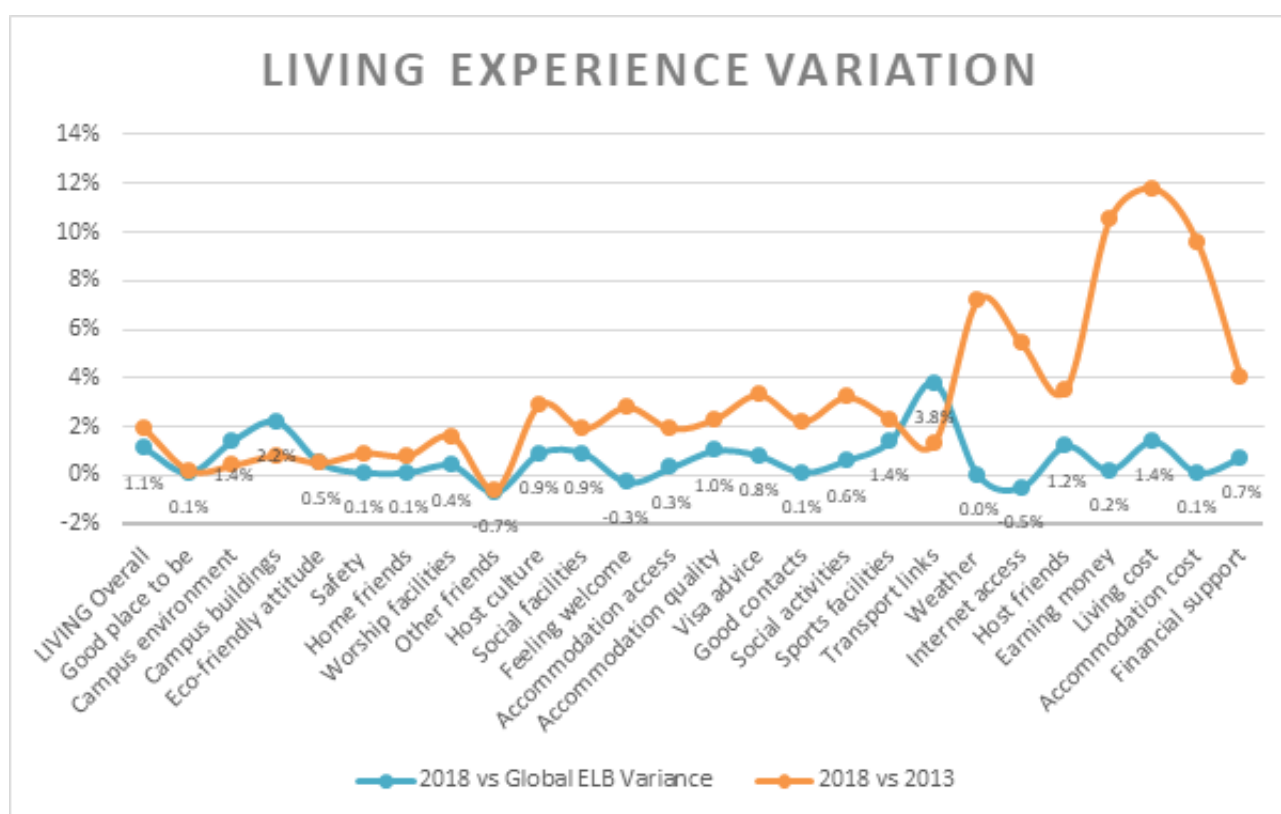


### Living Experience: Variation Compared to 2013 and Global ELB

Living Overall has shown an increase of just under 2% from 2013. Significant improvements can be seen in Living Costs and Weather when comparing 2013 and 2018 results for Living Experience, which tempers the results for the drop in Living Cost results when comparing 2016 and 2018 results.

The category of Other Friends has shown a decrease when compared against both the Global ELB and the 2013 results. This is an area that requires attention to ensure that this trend does not continue.

Also noteworthy are the Transport Links results. A small increase was noted when comparing 2013 and 2018 results but there was an improvement against the Global ELB of 3.8%.



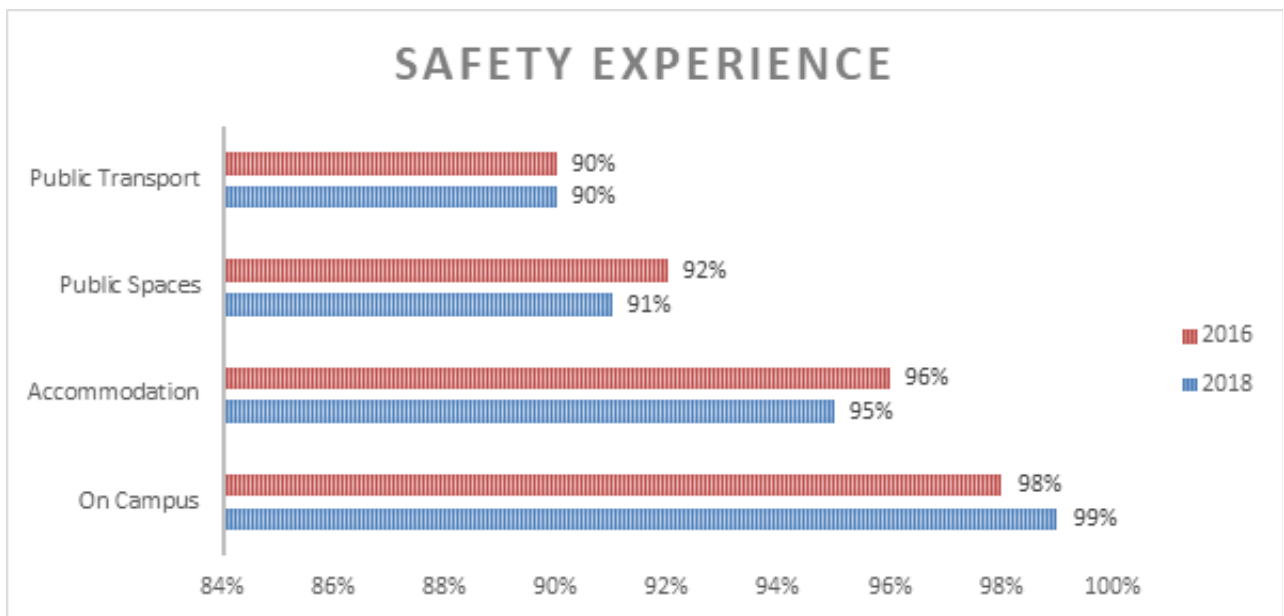
### Living Experience: Student Responses Compared to Global ELB

The graph below shows that Transport Links rates very highly against the Global ELB, but that the Other Friends, Internet Access and Feeling Welcome measures are possible future areas of focus.

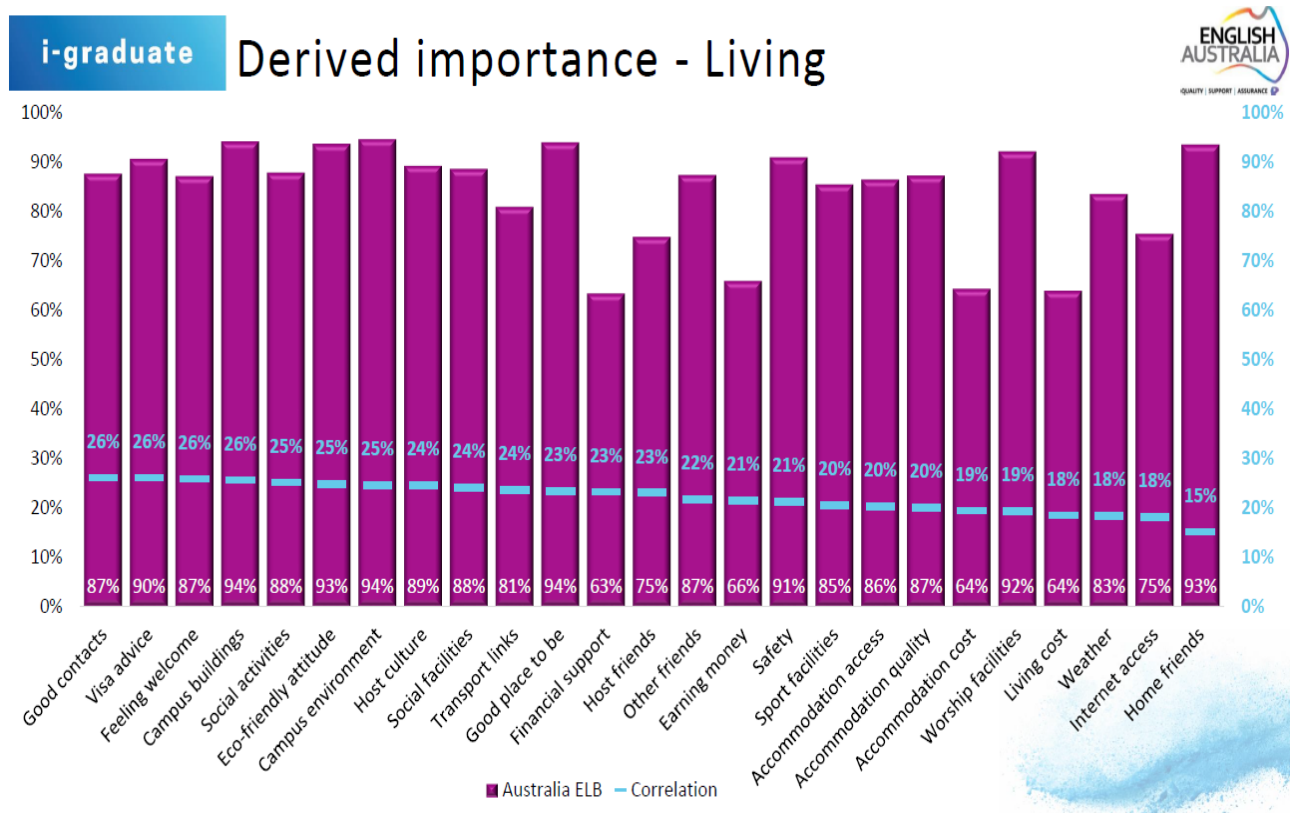


### Living Experience: Safety Summary

Safety Experience rates very highly against students' needs when selecting a study destination. Safety in Public Places and Accommodation have dropped only slightly since 2016, but given the importance to students in their decision-making process, these areas could be reviewed to determine if further action should be taken.



## Living analysis



As with the arrival results, the variation between different aspects of 'living' are small but still worth noting when considering what areas to focus on. These are:

- good contacts
- visa advice
- feeling welcome
- campus building.

### Good contacts

Students see networking as a critical component of a positive living experience. Making good contacts for the future whether within or outside of the classroom contributes to this. Providing students with these networking opportunities can leave lasting impressions on students.

### Visa advice

Ensuring your college informs students accurately and promptly on anything to do with visas means students feel more confident during their time in Australia.

### Feeling welcome

While aspects of this may be beyond a college's control, ensuring your students are warmly welcomed can lead to a positive experience.

### Campus building

The design and quality of the campus, what it looks like, the internal quality, functionality and beauty are all factors that can contribute to this aspect of the ELB and a positive student experience.

## Case study: Navitas English Manly

**Location:** Sydney, NSW

**Size:** Medium (150-250 students)

**Main ELT programs offered:**

- General English
- Exam preparation such as IELTS
- Cambridge suite

**Areas of strength:**

- School recommendation
- Support
- Living
- Overall satisfaction

### Context

Navitas English colleges generally ranked very highly in this ELB. Navitas English has consolidated its Bondi Junction and Wynyard Green centres to Hyde since the last Barometer so it is difficult to compare figures, but it is clear that the organisation is making a significant contribution to the positive experience of its students. Although this case study focuses on the Manly centre, the policies and approaches described apply across the board to Navitas English centres in Sydney, Brisbane, Darwin and Perth.

### Utilising student feedback

Student feedback is the foundation of Navitas' approach to provision of student support. Students undertake an online survey during class time every quarter, and are canvassed on their satisfaction with teaching, course progress, accommodation and social activities. Responses are measured using the Net Promoter Score system and Likert scales, and opportunities for open-ended feedback for each question are also provided.

The results of this survey are analysed by Centre Managers and Directors of Studies and a quarterly action plan is developed within a company template (see Appendix B). This analysis is both quantitative and qualitative: along with number-crunching, relevant comments from the survey are copied and pasted verbatim into the report for more in-depth insights. Centre management propose possible practical solutions, and the report is sent to company management and used to inform budget development. This robust feedback loop underscores a strong customer service ethic throughout the organisation.

### Sufficient staff

Navitas English recognises the value of a designated staff member with responsibility for the student experience. The company has appointed a national Director of Student Services and Experience, a full-time position working with centre Directors of Studies. This has been seen as a good investment by the company as it provides valuable support to staff at centres around Australia delivering non-educational services such as an activities program. The overarching philosophy is 'How can we make it easier for the students?', and this approach has led to initiatives such as liaising with banks and health insurance providers, for example, to bring their services to the college rather than the students having to go to them. Each centre also has its own Activities Coordinators with

direct responsibility for promoting a positive student experience through engagement within and outside the college.



*Graduation at Navitas English Manly*

Monthly Zoom meetings with the Director of Student Services, all Centre Managers and Activities Coordinators are held to discuss the student experience. This provides an opportunity for Activities Coordinators to share their ideas and resources for any forthcoming festival or special event, eg the World Cup, the Melbourne Cup or ANZAC Day.

### **Encouraging a student experience around Australia**

Other Navitas English campuses are endorsed during orientation at Manly, and students are actively encouraged to explore Australia; under the Navitas 'Airlink' Program, if they have enrolled for 20 weeks of tuition and wish to study at a Navitas English campus in another Australian city for a minimum of four of those weeks, they receive a free flight to that city. More than 80 Navitas English students have taken up this offer since the 2016 Barometer.

### **Support for working students**

The curriculum is structured so that General English students can start on any Monday of the year, thus accommodating student travel and work plans.

Students are also offered help in applying for work and can participate in weekly one-hour Job Support classes, which help with aspects of job seeking such as preparation of resumes and covering letters in an 8-week syllabus. All students can register for two 15-minute 1:1 job support sessions with a senior teacher, who can work on jobseekers' individual needs, and each centre has a subscription to Student Jobs Central where students can register for employment.

Evening programs are provided so that students are able to work during the day: this has been an extremely popular move and one that recognises the needs of students who wish to improve their English as well as earn enough to support their study or travel.

## Case Study: University of Western Australia Centre for English Language Teaching

**Location:** Perth, WA

**Size:** Medium (150-499 students)

**Main ELT programs offered:**

- General English
- EAP/Direct Entry
- Exam preparation

**Areas of strength:**

- Living
- Support

### Context

The Director of Studies at the University of Western Australia Centre for English Teaching (UWA CELT) believes the Centre's approach of providing personalised attention to each student in every program is the key to the positive student experience they enjoy and to the Centre's success in the recent ELTB survey. The Centre has a number of features and initiatives that facilitate this.

### Stable and experienced staff

UWA CELT has team of highly experienced teachers and staff whose key attribute is empathy, and that 'putting yourself in the students' shoes' is the principle that everyone, from senior management down, embodies. The staff make a point of talking to students whenever possible and appropriate, helping them feel connected and supported. New staff have a slow transition to the Centre, with considerable observation and support to make sure they are able to share this ethos.

### Specialist staff

The appointment of a 0.6 Student Engagement Officer with sole responsibility for the student experience at CELT was a positive step, according to the Director of Studies. The person selected had been teaching at the Centre for a number of years, was fully cognisant with the context and has already made a substantial difference to the students' experience.

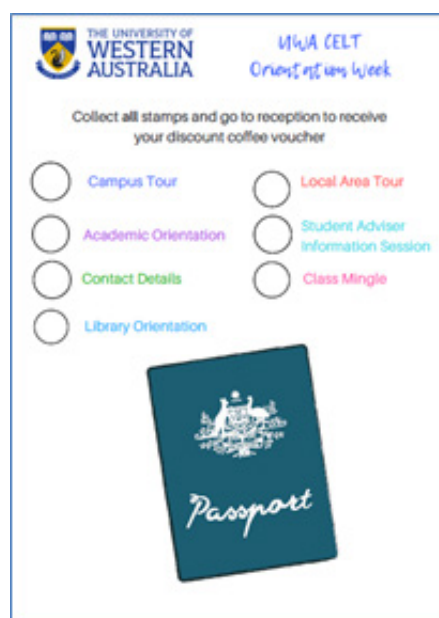
The Centre has a very experienced, committed and highly valued Student Advisor with a substantial knowledge of academic, legal and medical issues through her extensive network of contacts within and outside the university. This enables her to build trust with the students easily, and they are not afraid to approach her for help. The value of this type of staff member cannot be overestimated.

### Learning: Student progress records

Each student is given a small four-page hard-copy progress record to take with them through their studies. Along with a statement of conditions for successful progress, the record includes a table that outlines the student's scores for the four skills, their attendance to date, advice for what they need to focus on in the next 'term' as well as an indication of their participation and interests. This is completed by teachers at the end of each term, and provides students with a concrete record and reminder for themselves as well as for the next teacher. In this way, both students and teachers have easy access to information about individual progress and participation.

### Student orientation

For Bridging Courses at CELT (offering successful students direct entry to university study), Day 1 orientation takes place on a Friday before courses start so that students arrive in class already knowing their way around the college, with a weekend to orient themselves to Perth, and ready to start study immediately. ELICOS students at CELT complete a hard-copy orientation 'passport', similar in concept to the one used at the University of Newcastle Language Centre (see Case Study 1) for a week-long series of 'bite-sized' activities and events available ensure that students become comfortable enough to ask the questions they need answers to.



*The UWA CELT Orientation Passport*

### A range of options for student engagement

Two Events Officers ensure there is always an out-of-class option for students designed either to provide learning support, address common student issues such as all-too prevalent scams, or provide opportunities for students to meet and interact with local students and others in the community.

The Centre is trialling strategies to engage students on Bridging Courses who find it difficult to focus anything other than their books and assignments. The Student Engagement Officer has offered workshops on health and well-being, including attention to mental health, and will increase these in the future, tapping into existing resources at the University's Health Promotion Unit where possible. She is planning to offer podcasts and webinars that can be accessed via the college Learning Management System at any time.

**Student evaluation**

The Centre carries out academic surveys every ten weeks, and Centre-wide general surveys take place on a quarterly basis. In the academic surveys, feedback is sought on teaching quality: this was not popular with teachers initially, but it is now seen as useful and affirming. The outcomes of the general surveys have been extremely useful in achieving change. For example, student computers were updated and a more effective wifi service installed after numerous complaints. Student focus groups are used to assess the value of proposed initiatives, and these have proved very useful.

# CHAPTER 3:

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## LEARNING

## Learning overview

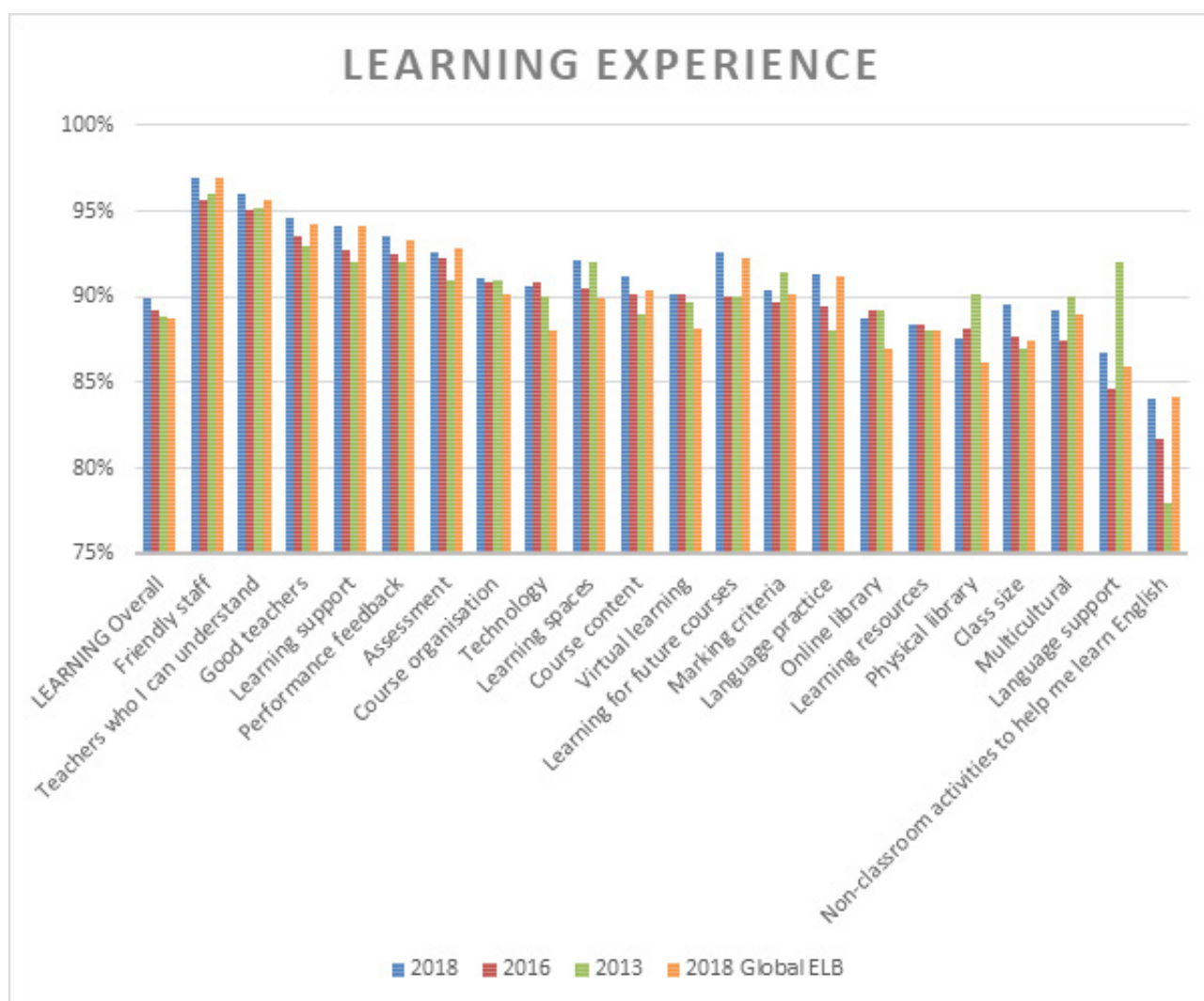
- Learning Experience ratings (Section 3.2) continue to increase (89.2%). Learning Spaces, Learning for Future Courses and Class Size have all improved since 2016.
- Learning Experience: Online Library and Physical Library decreased compared to previous years. However, they both rate above the Global ELB.

### Learning ELB results

The Learning Satisfaction ratings survey the students experience at their language school. This considers the course content, the teachers' attitude and helpfulness, the physical and virtual learning environments.

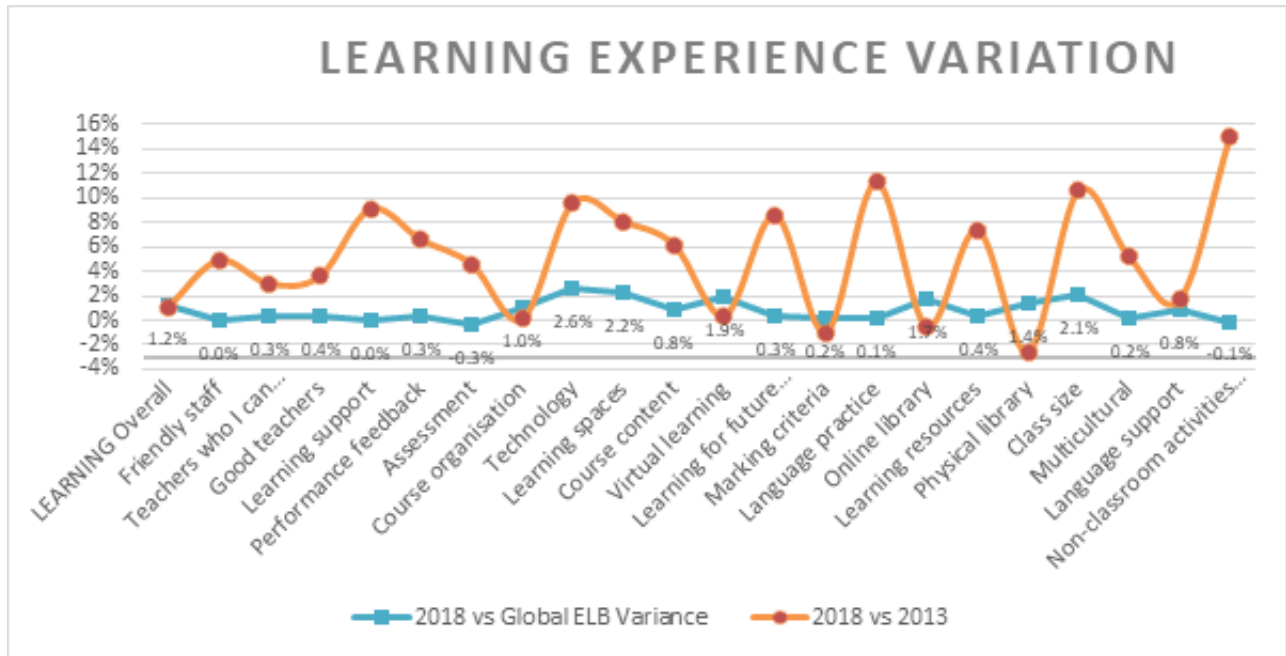
### Learning Experience: Percentage of Positive/Supporting Responses

Overall the Learning Experience results were very positive with almost all categories improving when compared to previous years. Online Library and Physical Library results were both below the results for 2016 but the variation is very low (0.5% and 0.6% respectively). These are areas to watch in the future to ensure that this trend does not continue.



### Learning Experience: Variation Compared to 2013 and Global ELB

Significant improvements have been seen between 2013 and 2018, particularly in the elements to the right of the graph, specifically Technology, Learning for Future Courses, Language Practice, Learning Resources, Class Size and Non-Classroom Activities.



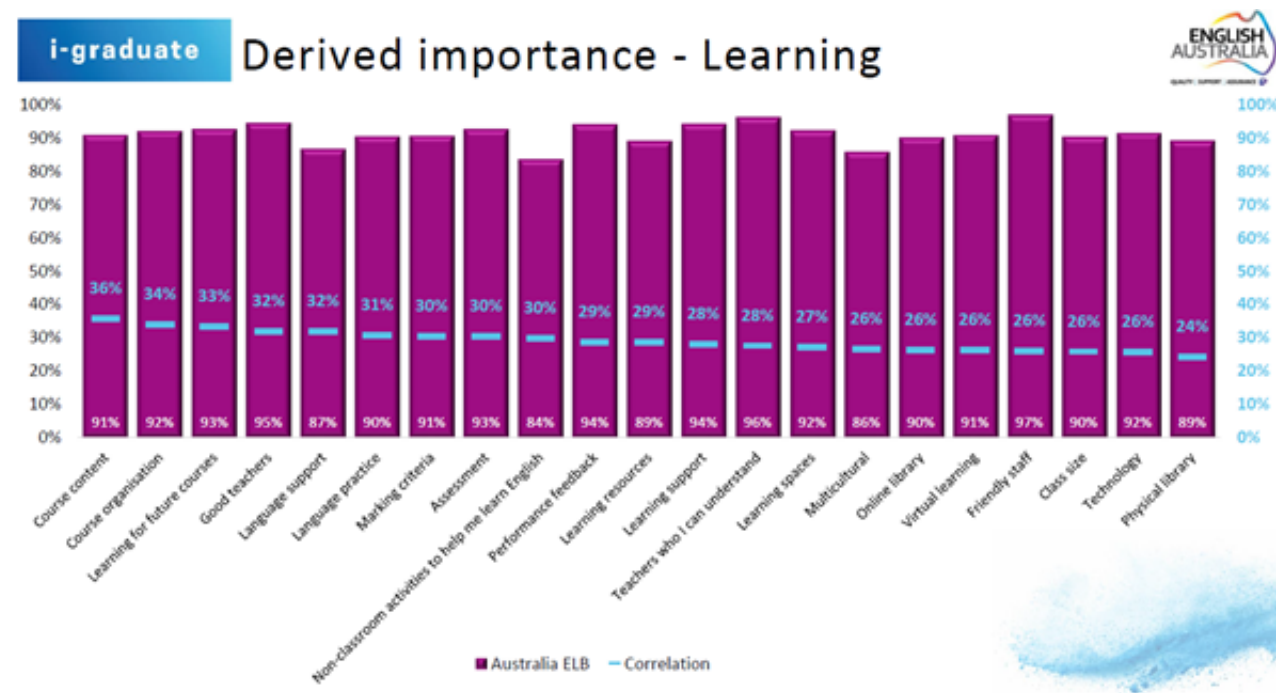
### Learning Experience: Student Responses Compared to Global ELB

In every category except two, the 2018 Learning results were above or equal to the Global ELB. Focus on Non-Classroom Activities to Help me Learn English and Assessment could quickly move these into the region above the Global ELB, however, as the variance in both instances was well under -1%.



## Learning analysis

Teaching Quality (98%), Personal Safety (97%) and University Reputation (94%) rate as the top three reasons for deciding where to study (Section 2.4.2). With two of these top three elements related to a student's learning experience, it is critical to understand what makes a positive learning experience.



The four key areas are:

- Course content
- Course organisation
- Learning for future courses
- Good teachers

### Course content

From tailored content to personalised learning, the composition of a course matters most to students.

### Course organisation

The smooth running of the course is another critical element of the learning experience.

### Learning for future courses

Students want to feel that their course gives them the necessary skills for whatever they want to study next. Clearly linking the course to their next study choice can contribute to this.

### Good teachers

With teaching quality rated as the top reason for deciding where to study, good teachers are perhaps the biggest contributor to this.

## Case study: University of Newcastle Language Centre

**Location:** Newcastle, NSW

**Size:** Medium (150-499 students)

**Main ELT programs offered:**

- General English
- EAP/Direct entry

**Areas of strength:**

- Overall satisfaction
- Arrival
- Learning
- Support
- Living

### Context

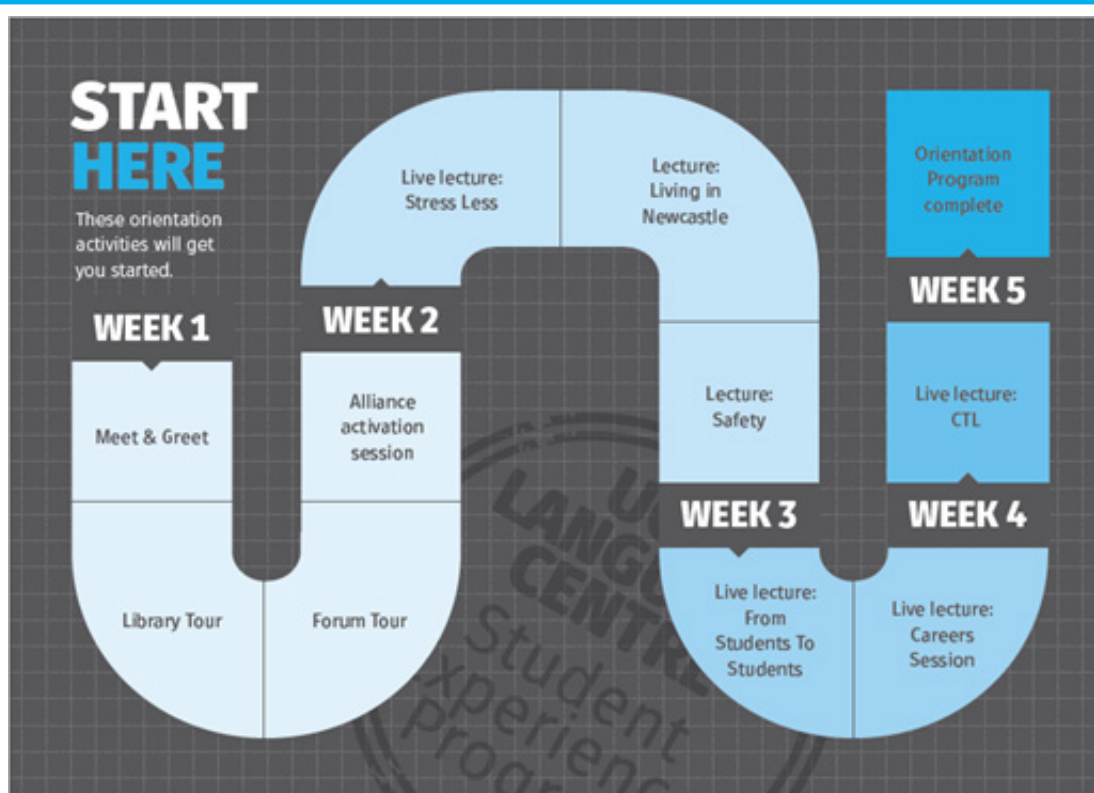
In 2011, this regional college received a 'pasting' in the ELB survey, particularly in the area of student contact, or lack of, with the community. The Director of the Language Centre was galvanised to move from a context where there was little opportunity for students to interact with people outside the Centre, and available options were random and disorganised, to a situation where students not only had opportunities to interact through a well-planned, diverse and exciting program, but also were actively encouraged to engage and to see the value of the experience. High ratings in all ELB focus areas as well as overall satisfaction are a testament to the work done at the Centre.

### Key staff

The first step was to appoint a .60 Student Engagement Coordinator (SEC) whose role was to draft and set up initiatives to encourage student engagement outside the classroom. This role and attendant costs are estimated to be just over \$10,000 pa, but the Director feels this is an 'amazing' investment in terms of the very positive outcomes from the ELT Barometer as well as from NEAS audits. Two enthusiastic casual staff assist the SEC to carry out the Centre's initiatives.

### Student 'Passport'

The SEC developed a student experience 'Passport' to encourage participation in events and activities relating to orientation and engagement. The Passport is a small attractive booklet that is stamped as students complete activities: one stamp equals five points and once a student has 20 points, they qualify for a free coffee from the university campus café and go into a quarterly draw for a \$100 gift voucher. This gamification of orientation and engagement is very popular and students become rather competitive about accumulating the stamps. The booklet also contains a campus map and student safety information, so is useful to have at hand.



*A page from the University of Newcastle Language Centre 'Passport' showing orientation activities*

### Passport activities are offered in the following four areas:

#### **Orientate Yourself**

The Passport contains prescribed orientation activities over five weeks, however formal orientation at Newcastle Language Centre takes place over two weeks in order to spread the information load and to make sure latecomers are catered for. After the first week, subsequent Orientate Yourself activities include lectures on managing stress; living in Newcastle; safety; and careers.

#### **Practice English**

Students can practice their English through classes in Pronunciation; Speed Conversation; Speech Pathology and/or Campus Conversation, which takes place with university and led by community volunteers, who are briefed on their role.

#### **Explore Newcastle**

Students have opportunities to visit different places in and around the city, organised by the Centre. ELICOS students are also encouraged to join university clubs, and to participate in the events and activities they organise.

#### **Experience Community**

This option brings students into direct contact with university community as they undertake volunteering through a university organisation, watch movies or take part in special events such as World Mental Health Day.

### Why a hard copy?

A hard copy rather than an app was selected for the Passport as it provides visible and tangible evidence of participation: the booklets are particularly popular with students who are not fully comfortable with technology. The SEC works closely with the marketing team to ensure a professional appearance that is on-brand.

### Strategies for 'Learning'

Newcastle Language Centre received high scores for 'Learning' in the Barometer. The Program Convenor puts this down to a long-term, stable staff who are familiar with the students, the program and what is required by the receiving institution. The staff is delighted with the positive external feedback they receive, and this helps motivate them to future efforts.

### Professional development program

The Centre has initiated a strong program of professional development for teachers. This includes an annual formal two-weekly PD focus which is structured to meet institutional and individual needs. Other regular initiatives include voluntary 'micro PD' sessions where staff present ideas in a 30-45-minute lunchtime event. These are becoming increasingly popular and have led to the establishment of a Reading Group: 1¼-hour sessions where teachers discuss selected articles that they have read on a particular topic.

### Supporting at-risk students

The Centre believes it is improving its strategies for identifying and supporting academically at-risk students. Teachers notify the Program Convenor of students they believe are at-risk by Wednesday of Week 4 in the 10-week program. These decisions are based on performance in outcomes of formative assessment tasks and class participation / engagement, with both the two class teachers collaborating to complete the template for the nomination, which requires teachers to provide reasons as to why the student has been nominated. Once all nominations have been received, the Program Convenor creates an Academically At-Risk register for the period of study and organises consultation times to speak with all the students on the register. These students, who generally respond positively to being identified, meet with the Program Convenor to prepare a Student Learning Plan, which may include 'catch-up sessions' comprising an extra six hours of instruction held over ten weeks (see diagram below).



#### SLP Diary

Date	Resources	Aims	Results	Time	Relevance
22/05	I watched two lectures that featured both audio and visuals. The lectures were from TED.com	Improve listening skills Expand my vocabulary	The second lecture was by the chef Jamie Oliver. He talked about lunch ladies. They are feeding our children every single day, and before a child can learn, their belly needs to be full, and these women and men are working on the front lines to create an educated society. I learnt many new words from the listening materials.	2 hours	Listening to new texts actively to get the meaning helps me to improve my listening skills. Expand my vocabulary
24/06	Catch-up Class		Wednesday's catch-up class focused on skills for the interview. We focused on how to support my opinion with examples. I learnt useful grammatical structures such as "I partially agree, however X" and "That is true, but I also think that Y"	45 mins	Expand my vocabulary Listening to new texts actively to get the meaning helps me to improve my listening skills.

*An excerpt from the UON Language Centre Student Learning Plan Diary*

Students can also access material on Blackboard to review lesson content. The Program Convenor pointed out the value of weaker students' learning how to make use of available support, as self-efficacy is crucial for their further studies when there is a greater possibility they may become lost in the university system.

**Curriculum quality**

The Centre is making considerable effort to ensure its curriculum is valid and appropriate. It has entered into a formal partnership with the University of Wollongong College to benchmark course outcomes and assessment, and the Program Convenor reports that teachers are highly involved and engaged in this very successful process.

The Centre will also be participating in a large-scale project through UECA that will utilise an online peer review portal to assist participating institutions with benchmarking their Direct Entry program outcomes.

## Case Study: ACU Centre for Languages, North Sydney

**Location: North Sydney (NSW)**

**Size: Small (<150 students)**

**Main ELT programs offered:**

- General English
- EAP
- IELTS Preparation

**Areas of strength:**

- Arrival
- Learning
- Support
- Living

### Context

Although ACU Centre for Languages North Sydney is a small campus in itself, it is part of an organisation with centres in Brisbane and Melbourne, and all are entities within the Australian Catholic University International portfolio. Each centre is managed by an Academic Manager reporting to a Head based in Brisbane. The ELICOS campuses collaborate closely on all matters relating to teaching and support, and most of the approaches and initiatives described in this case study are also implemented in the other campuses.

This was the fourth time that ACU Centre for Languages participated in the ELB, and the North Sydney campus featured as a top performer in the survey's four focus categories. There was also a high student participation rate.

### Relationship with the university

The Centre for Languages is fortunate to have a close relationship with the university, thus the benefit of university resources. ELICOS students are seen as part of the university as soon as they enrol and are able to make full use of university services including health and counselling, a Career Hub and the library. They are automatically enrolled in the university's Academic Skills Unit and can access English language learning resources on Moodle if they wish. The Centre offers Tertiary Preparation Programs as well as English language courses, providing considerable opportunity for staff to collaborate and students to mix with peers from a wide range of cultural and language backgrounds, including local students, in the student spaces. Strategic operational planning is carried out with ACU International; the Head of School, Associate Director of International Partnerships and Relations (where the Centre sits in the organisation/ university) and the Pro Vice-Chancellor, International are all extremely supportive of the Centre's function and operation.

**Responsibility for a positive student experience**

The university views the ELB as a crucial indicator of how the Centre(s) are tracking in terms of the student experience, so the Head takes responsibility for making sure processes and people are student-focused. There is clearly a culture of care and concern for students throughout the Centre, with teaching and support staff taking their roles seriously in terms of making sure students are happy in their study. There is considerable collaboration between the academic, marketing and admissions teams and the International Student Advisers for ELICOS and TPP; the organisation is open to change and structured to accommodate this. The Academic Manager (Acting) in North Sydney is proud of how responsive Centre staff are to student needs.

In terms of student feedback, quarterly online surveys are collated and analysed first by the Centre's Academic Manager and Assistant Academic Manager, then discussed with teaching staff, with any items with budgetary impact going to the Head for approval. Outcomes from surveys have had considerable impact on college practice. Student feedback has led to change from the amalgamation of campuses and an increase in engagement with the university to a broadening of after-class activities options.

**Learning**

It has long been ACU Centre for Languages policy to have small class sizes (an average of 12), and this, together with a diversity of students, is consistently rated highly in college surveys. The Centre works hard to deliver high-quality courses: courses are reviewed annually based on feedback from students, teachers and the changing needs of relevant academic and professional organisations. The three Centres work together on the curriculum and syllabus for each course; programs are uniform and delivered in all three locations in a similar way, and courses are reviewed on a regular basis.

The Centre is in the process of introducing new courses/ programs, a joint effort between staff at the three campuses. Because it is part of the university, the Centre has detailed descriptions of its course content in unit outlines and study guides, providing students with transparent goals, outcomes, tasks and assessments. Students rated Centre assessment highly, particularly group assessments and the opportunity to present a draft before a final written assessment. Assessment tasks are refreshed on a rotating basis and regular moderation and standardisation sessions with staff from all three ACU Centres take place with the support of technology.

**Orientation**

The Academic Manager and Assistant Academic Manager conduct Day 1 orientation with new students, assisted by support and teaching staff, giving teachers insights into student obligations under their visas as well as the range of support services offered. The Centre organises a biannual Orientation Advisory Meeting comprising the Academic Manager, the university International Student Advisor, the Admissions Manager or staff, the Careers Advisor, the Administrative Assistant along with a teacher and a student representative to ensure the content and process of orientation is relevant and effective.

### Out-of-class activities

Being a small centre, ACU Centre for Languages is not able to offer an especially wide range of activities outside class time, so the program is carefully designed to offer language learning support as well as engagement with other students and the community. ELICOS teachers are paid to run weekly sessions on various language skills, for example: listening, pronunciation and grammar. Student volunteers from the university's credit-bearing Community Engagement units run more social events such as an exhibition of student photos or movie afternoons (with free popcorn and soft drinks). There are also weekly hour-long presentations by speakers from within and outside the Centre which offer students insights into the diverse lives of Australians. Attendance at these sessions is promoted strongly by teachers, who encourage the students to take notes for discussion in class the next day. Students are able to use the Centre's computer lab for further study, homework and research from 1-4 pm every day.

The university provides support as well. Student Support Services Staff are invited to the Centre to run presentations and workshops of interest and use to students. At least twice a year university Careers Advisors, Counselling Service staff and International Student Advisers run workshops on job-seeking and career development, university orientation and counselling services, and students can make an appointment to discuss their own job requirements: several ELICOS graduates are delighted to have secured jobs on campus through this channel.



*ACU Centre for Languages students vote for their favourite student photo*

Centre staff are well-qualified and experienced, and there is a strong core of teachers who have been part of the organisation for many years. Teachers appreciate opportunities for consultation in the planning of professional development that keeps them up to date with current theories and approaches as well as operational issues, and there is a strong sense of collegiality. The Centre has a five-term teaching year, leaving four student-free weeks where teachers can focus on resource and professional development; the Academic Manager has noticed a difference in staff engagement.

# CHAPTER 4:

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## SUPPORT

## Support overview

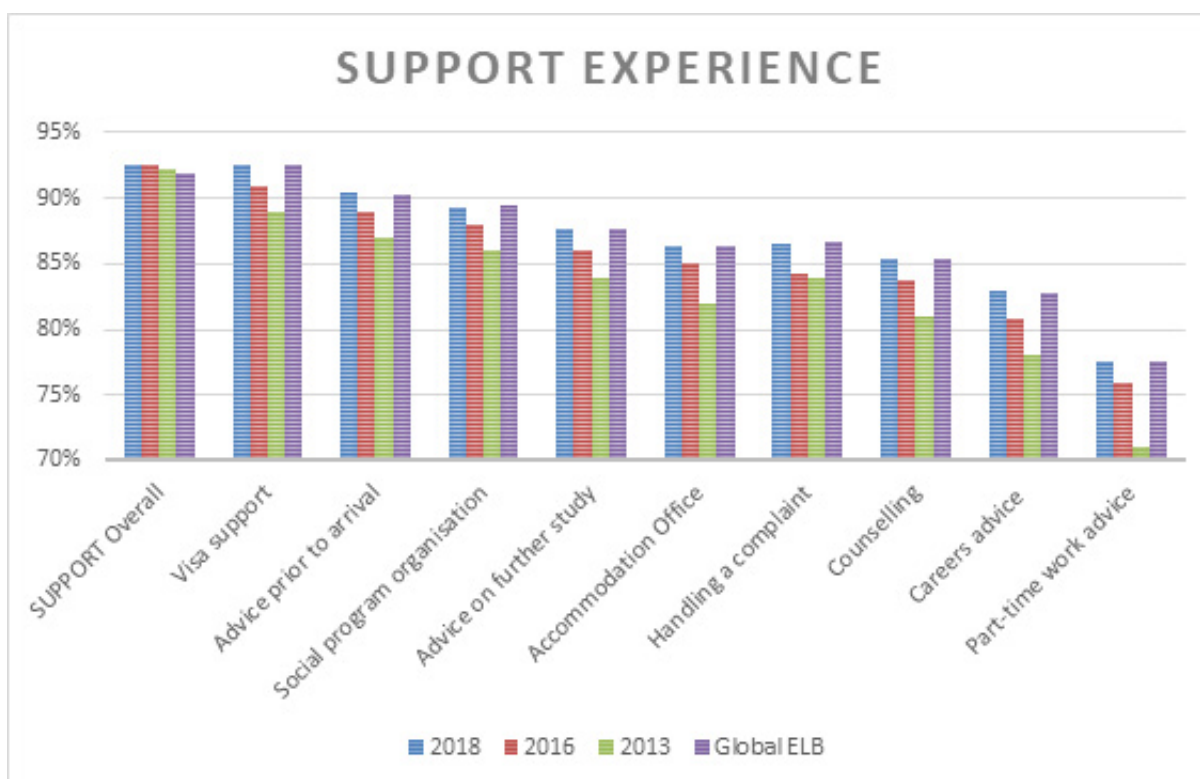
- Support Experience (Section 3.4) remained the same as 2016 (92.5%). The greatest improvement was seen in the Visa Support and Handling a Complaint scores
- Support Experience: No significant areas for improvement were identified in the most recent survey. All measures improved from previous years and are very close – within 0.5% - to the Global ELB scores.

## Support ELB results

The Support Experience reviews the support network components that help students function in Australia. This includes study guidance, psychological support, complaint management and work and careers advice.

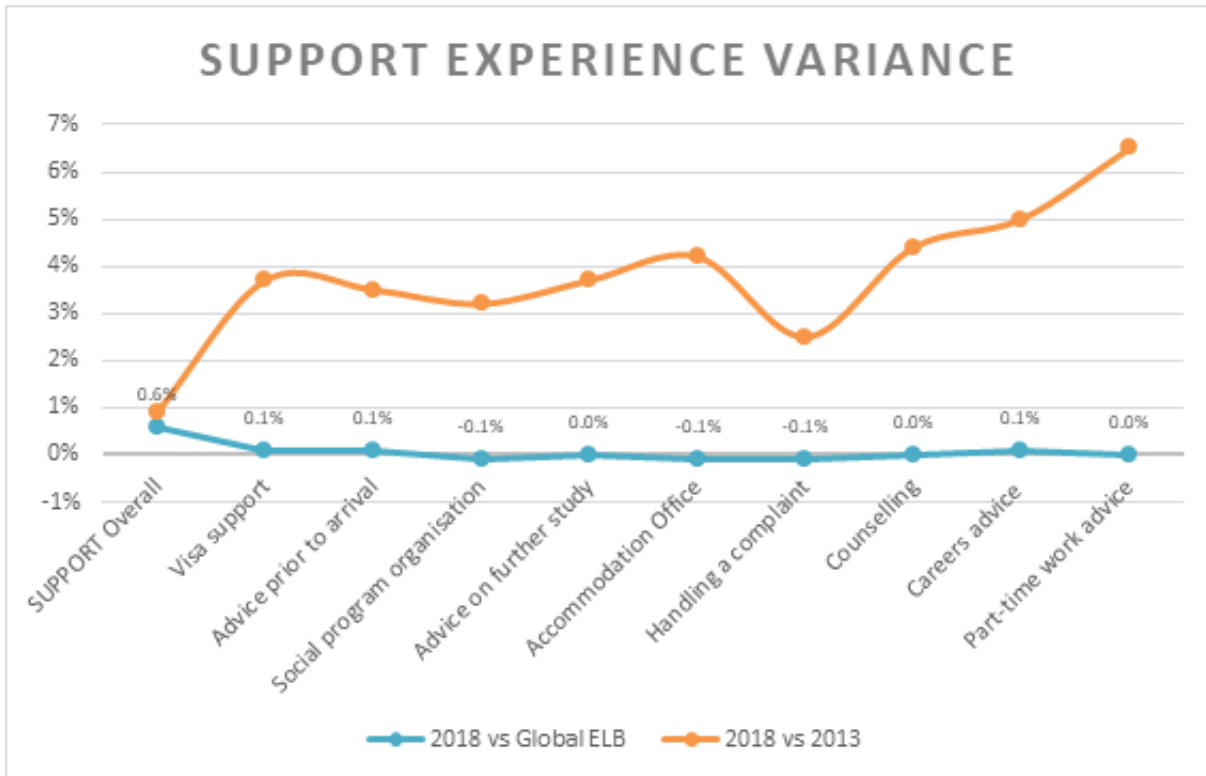
### Support Experience: Percentage of Positive/Supporting Responses

While Support Overall has remained steady at 92.5% between 2016 and 2018, every other category has improved, year-on-year. Support Experience is very positive and students are responding well to the support processes available to them.



### Support Experience: Variation Compared to 2013 and Global ELB

The response to the support structures that are available to students shown in the graph below is very positive in most areas when compared to previous years. Part Time Work Advice and Careers Advice have improved considerably since 2013.

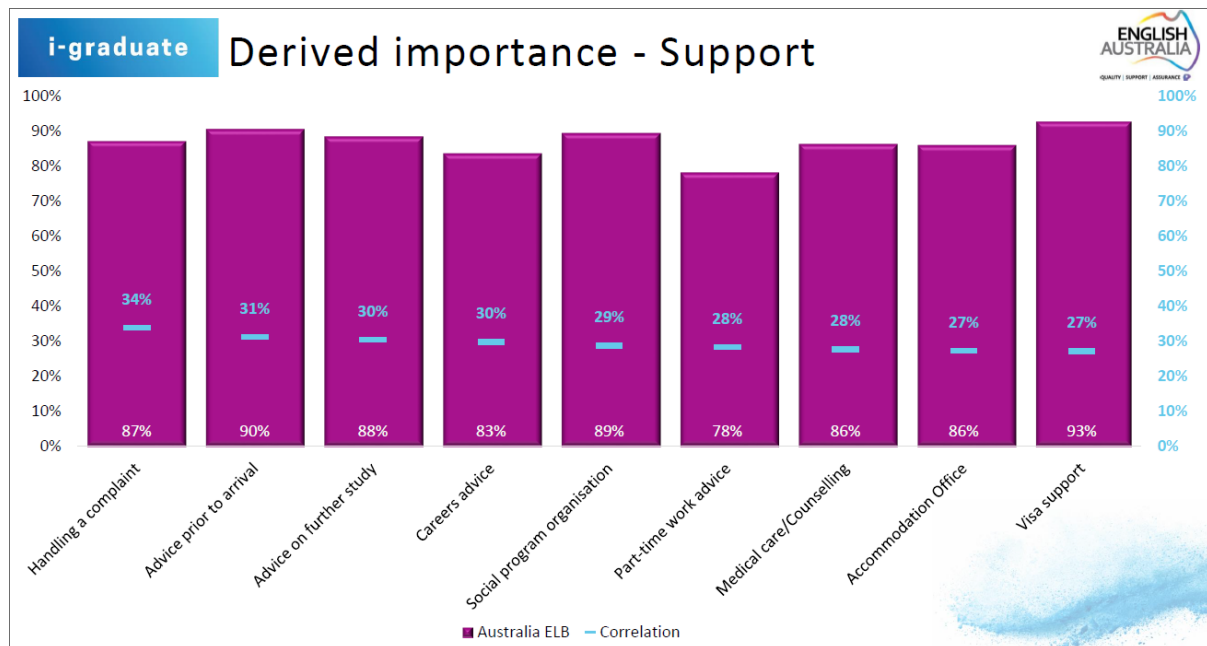


### Support Experience: Student Responses Compared to Global ELB

The areas that do not meet the Global ELB scores for the Support Experience show only very minor variation. In the graph below, Social Program Organisation, Handling and Complaint, Advice on Further Study and Accommodation Office all show a variation of 0.1% or less.



## Support analysis



The four areas of support that have the strongest correlation to a positive experience are:

- Handling a complaint
- Advice prior to arrival
- Advice on further study
- Career choice

### Handling a complaint

As the most important component of support, how colleges handle a complaint can significantly affect a student's experience. Having a clear complaints handling process that both students and staff understand may help in this regard.

### Advice prior to arrival

Setting out a clear arrival path for students can make not only them comfortable but also other significant people who can influence the student, especially agents and family.

Influencers play an important role in the decision regarding which country and which institution students apply to. Education Agents/Consultants (70%) continue to be the most important factor in the decision process and continue to become more influential over time. As the influence of Agents has increased, the influence of Family (14%) has decreased.

**Advice on further study**

45% of students indicated that they have plans to continue their study, but at another location. 26% of the respondents are uncertain of their plans, post study. These students present an opportunity to influence and guide into further study via a targeted marketing campaign.

**Career choice**

Employment is the third most important consideration for students when they think about their future plans. How colleges support their students in career choice can lead to a positive experience for the student.

## Case Study: Monash College

**Location:** Melbourne CBD, Clayton (VIC)

**Size:** Large (500+ students)

**Main ELT programs offered:**

- Academic English

**Area of strength:**

- Support

### Context

Monash College is delighted with this year's EL Barometer outcome. As they did not fare well in the areas of Support and Arrival in the 2016 survey, senior management implemented a number of initiatives and were rewarded with a pronounced improvement in both areas. Along with the poor previous ELB showing, management was concerned that a rise in student numbers was leading to an increase in the number of personal safety-related critical incidents that students had been reporting, ranging from a systematic campaign of cyber-bullying involving Chinese students to incidents of intimidation on public transport. The need for effective student support was seen as imperative.

### Staffing

Monash College started by reviewing staff positions and roles. From having a few people focused on different aspects of student support in each of the organisation's sectors, there is now a centralised unit across all divisions headed by a full-time Director of Student Services (DSS) with responsibility for a coordinated approach to student support. The DSS manages the Monash College under-18 guardians along with the student engagement team, counselling team, careers team and homestay team.

### Support for under-18s

The College Director, English pointed out that there has been a significant increase in the number of students under the age of 18 (U18), who require specialised support. The care starts on arrival. Each U18 student is met at the airport by an external 'chauffeur' service, whose friendly drivers have a longstanding relationship with the homestay families and approved accommodation providers and this makes for a very positive introduction to Australia and Melbourne for young people who may be anxious about their new home. The U18 guardians appointed by Monash College have no more than 70 students in their care, and they meet regularly with the students to assist them with everyday requirements such as opening a bank account, arranging medical appointments as well as giving regular support. The U18 guardians also provide parents with regular updates on their children. The College has made concerted efforts to develop a closer relationship with accommodation providers and this has helped ensure that appropriate conditions for vulnerable students, such as curfews, are met.

### Homestay

Appropriate accommodation is the foundation of student support and Monash College provides regular support and training for their homestay providers in areas such as a general orientation, mental health and cross-cultural awareness, along with a 'meet your guardian' session. Homestay locations are inspected every six months to ensure compliance with requirements, and there are events such as 'pot luck' evenings and a now-annual Christmas party to maintain a positive relationship with hosts.

### Student engagement focus

Monash College has made considerable efforts to develop a strong student engagement program. The two Team Leaders who manage activities for English language students at each of the two main campuses have a social work background, as there is often a need to assess issues so that students in need can be referred to the most appropriate people. The team works hard throughout every semester to keep students engaged with a recreation program of on-campus events, such as get-togethers for Eid Il Fitr, Tanabata Festival, Harmony Day, Luna New Year, the World Cup and movie nights; clubs including soccer, yoga, guitar and chess; and weekend excursions visiting tourist spots such as the Dandenong Ranges, the Peninsula Hot Springs and Phillip Island or attending AFL football games.

### Orientation

Strong orientation is seen as crucial to a successful student experience. Along with the usual Day 1 introduction to the College and the program, students take part in activities that orient them to the teaching and student services staff and to each other. The College has gamified the system of orientation inspired by the idea that social ease leads to student success. They have introduced the 'Monash Collect' card game, and an 'Amazing Race'-style activity around the campus and local community with prizes, as well as team-building activities and a popular student fair complete with booths where local services can distribute information (see photo below), and free fairy floss. This has helped students engage with each other and with College life and the wider community, providing a sense of belonging. Following each orientation students are surveyed to evaluate whether the team has achieved these goals, and suggestions for improvement are incorporated into future planning.



*Police giving information (and chocolate) to Monash College students at Orientation*

**Role of counsellors**

The three Monash College counsellors play a key role, not only in terms of providing 1:1 support for students but also as educators in an attempt to help students avoid negative experiences. Regular workshops for students on topics such as managing stress, gaming, healthy eating, and appropriate sexual behaviour are offered, and are well-attended and well-received. The College also works closely with the university to make sure College students are informed about any relevant events, activities and initiatives that are open to them to attend.

Counsellors attend teachers' meetings as a matter of course, and provide workshops for teachers at staff PD days in areas such as setting boundaries with students, knowing when to escalate issues to a counsellor and managing the stress of failing students. Counsellors trained as careers advisers play a key role in helping students with subject selection, making the right choice in their future course of study at the university, and also help with the transition to the next stage of their pathway, pointing out the support services on offer.

**A welcoming space**

Monash College staff emphasised the importance of creating an inviting and comfortable area for students. There are many light and open student spaces at the College where students can study, relax, play table tennis, eat together or take advantage of the free tea, coffee and Milo on offer. Support staff often have drop-in sessions in these areas to minimise teacher-student 'distance'.

## Case Study: Macquarie Education Group Australia (MEGA)

**Location: Sydney CBD (NSW)**

**Size: Small (<250 students)**

**Programs:**

- ELT
- VET

**Main ELT programs offered:**

- General English
- Primary School Preparation
- High School Preparation
- EAP
- IELTS Preparation

**Areas of strength:**

- School Recommendation
- Support

### Context

Although MEGA has been operating for a number of years, this was the first time they participated in the ELB and the CEO was very happy with the results. He and the Academic Manager referred to the usefulness of the exercise, along with a recent NEAS validation, in terms of pinpointing areas for further development as well as validation of their current practice.

### Ongoing evaluation

Evaluation is essential to MEGA's ongoing improvement of the student experience. MEGA students undertake quarterly evaluation surveys on facilities, teaching, resources, support and also its agents. Students use a Likert scale to indicate their view and are invited to provide comments on each response. Students also complete a brief exit survey on graduation. Feedback is initially analysed by the Academic Manager, and key areas and possible solutions are reported to the CEO. These are then discussed by the CEO, the Campus Director, the ELICOS and Vocational Academic Managers, the Student Services Officer, the IT System Administrator, the CFO and the Chief Financial Officer, and the Admissions Officer in a biannual Continuous Improvement Committee meeting and action is taken as required.

Student (and agent) feedback has changed the face of MEGA. The college has been redecorated and re-lit so that it is bright and welcoming; student computers have been upgraded; and students now have access to high speed wifi (the eternal challenge) throughout the college. The CEO feels that the positive response to these upgrades, and the associated word-of-mouth, is more than worth the cost involved.

### Top-down support

It is clear that student support is high on the list of priorities for this college, and it starts at the top with a CEO who takes a hands-on approach. Both he and the Academic Manager have an open-door policy for staff and students, and problems can be sorted out quickly. With a migration law background and extensive experience with the college's network of receiving institutions, the CEO is also able to give individual

attention to students needing study guidance.

### **First language support**

Teachers are selected for their personal warmth and their language skills as well as their teaching skills, and teachers make every effort to be approachable. Students know that their teacher is generally their first port of call if there is a problem, and it is highly likely that there is a teacher or administrative officer who can speak their first language if necessary.

### **Orientation**

The Academic Manager leads MEGA student Day 1 orientation, which includes course information along with 'getting to know you' activities. With a weekly intake for most courses numbers can be quite small, so students really get to know each other and the Academic Manager, leading to strong relationships and a sense of belonging from the start of their study at the institution.

### **Out-of-class activities**

As with most other colleges, there is a calendar of daily events in and around Sydney that students can join. This is prepared by the Academic Manager – English, and promoted by the Student Services Officer and teachers face-to-face, via the student noticeboard and also on the college's Facebook page. Teachers are paid to accompany the students, who are subsidised for more expensive activities.



*MEGA students celebrating graduation and International Food Day*

MEGA has used its small size to achieve a personal connection with its students. At the beginning of every level, students complete a needs analysis with their teacher. The format of this is not prescribed and the teacher selects an appropriate method to find out what the students in her/his class see as priority for their learning, and what the students identify as their strengths, weaknesses and interests. This knowledge enables teachers to match students with others who share the same interest, or strong with weak students, or allocate teachers to help students with particular areas of weakness. 'Buddies' are also created with students who share a language or cultural background, and may be across different classes or between different levels.

The college has four hours of elective classes such as Australian Culture, Arts & Music, PTE Preparation or Survival English every week to cater for student weakness and/or interest. These change very four weeks and are popular and well-received.

## **CHAPTER 5:**

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## FURTHER SUGGESTIONS AND RESOURCES

## Developing a culture of student support

It is evident that many colleges have adopted an approach to developing and sustaining a 'culture of student support' throughout the organisation, which is essential in order to reap long-term benefits. This takes time, planning and resources.

### Evaluate your culture of support

The survey at Appendix C is designed to help you identify areas of priority for setting up, implementing, evaluating and managing the student support services at your college. It has been adapted from the English Australia Guide to Best Practice in Student Support Services (2009) and outlines aspects identified as necessary for good practice in this area.

### How to use this survey

1. Go through the points in the survey and identify which areas your college does not meet, or only meets to some extent. You may find you need to review whole areas, or there may be isolated points that need attention.
2. Consider risk in terms of both the impact on students/your business reputation if the areas are not addressed, along with possible resource implications for making changes.
3. Work with staff to decide on priorities for action.
4. Identify staff to take responsibility for these, making sure that a senior staff member has overall responsibility.
5. Develop a timeline with milestones for reporting on progress and ensuring that actions are on track.
6. Once any initiatives have been implemented, ensure that there is regular evaluation and review that includes stakeholder feedback, particular from students.

For more information on change management, college staff may be interested in a [resource](#) developed by the Government of Western Australia Public Sector Commission in 2017 to assist its agencies to manage change.

### General resources and support

ELICOS colleges clearly recognise that students need structure, variety and fun, but most of all understanding and empathy. In some cases colleges enable students participate in activities that would be difficult to do in their home country, such as singing with people from around Queensland as well as other international students in a massed choir in the recent 'Raise Your Voice' event, inspired by the highly successful University of Queensland Institute of Teaching and Continuing Education (ICTE-UQ) Chorus and supported by state government international education body, StudyQueensland. Many larger colleges run a Student Leadership program (see what the Centre for English Teaching at the University of Sydney is doing in this space) to promote engagement and build leadership skills. ELICOS students (and, in some cases, those offering services associated with support for international students) can be nominated by their colleges to be recognised by awards offered by StudyMelbourne and StudyNSW.

Local government is also doing its part in many Australia cities by offering International Student Welcome events, such as the one offered in Sydney recently. State international education bodies offer resources for students, including guides to aspects of living in their new state. Insider Guides publish up-to-date information on their website on aspects of life in Australia. This includes a pre-arrival 'kit' outlining advice on accommodation, setting up a bank account and getting a phone plan. There are also posts on relevant issues such as

work and employment, culture, rights and legislation, and even a basic introduction to dating. Specific location guides give details of living in Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney and Tasmania.

### English Australia Best Practice Guides

A more detailed guide to supporting students, in particular through orientation and induction, engaging with others in the college and the community and care of students under the age of 18 can be found in English Australia's Guide to Best Practice in Providing Student Support Services (2009), available from the organisation through [easec@englishaustralia.com.au](mailto:easec@englishaustralia.com.au).

Staff at ELICOS colleges may find practical ideas and support in other English Australia Guides to Best Practice in ELICOS. These are available free to staff at member colleges, or they can be purchased.

Current titles relevant to the student experience include:

- Monitoring Student Progress
- Monitoring Student Satisfaction
- Managing Professional Development
- Direct Entry Programs, including a Supplement to Moderation and Validation (of assessment).

### Conferences

Connection with others in the sector can lead to new and/or more effective practice, and providers report that the conversations, as well as the learnings, that take place at the many conferences and professional development workshops within and connected to the ELICOS industry have resulted in positive change. The English Australia Conference always includes presentations or panels with a focus on improving the ELICOS student experience and the NEAS Management Conference offers valuable insights

in all aspects of managing an ELICOS college. Outside ELICOS, the Australian International Education Conference is an opportunity for ELICOS college staff to learn with and from other international education providers at a high level, and anyone working in student services should consider membership of the ISANA International Education Association for its professional development and resources.

### Awards

Although, in many cases, a relatively small change in approach or practice can lead to substantial gains in student satisfaction with their experience, there is considerable creativity and resourcefulness in the sector that colleges can adapt, implement or be inspired by. English Australia offers an annual Award for Innovation in ELICOS, and colleges may like to explore some innovative approaches and practices that have been recognised in past years. Recognition of sector best practice and innovation is also offered by the International Education Association of Australia.

### Acknowledgements

The Best Practice section owes a considerable debt to the following institutions and staff who gave generously of their time and their initiatives in the spirit of collaboration.

#### ACU Centre for Languages, North Sydney

- Svetlana Lukovic, Acting Academic Manager
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- Ruby Zhuang, Academic Manager, English

**Monash College**

- Jennifer Coster, Director, English
- Clare Harper, Director of Student Services

**Navitas English Manly**

- Sally Waite, Executive General Manager, English and Testing, Navitas
- Alex Cadman, Centre Manager and Director of Studies; Principal, NSW and Queensland

**University of Adelaide College**

- Andrew Foley, Centre Director
- Rola Youhia, Director of Studies
- Claire Goodwin, Student Services (ELICOS)
- Luke Eastman, Student Engagement Coordinator

**University of Newcastle Language Centre**

- Seamus Fagan, Director, English Language and Foundation Studies
- Ben Doran, Program Convenor
- Anne Burnett, Student Engagement Coordinator

**University of Western Australia Centre for English Language Teaching**

- Anne-Marie Wright, Director of Studies
- Fiona Taylor, Student Engagement Officer

**Project writers**

- Laura Nicholas, English Australia
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# **CHAPTER 6:**

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## SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

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## Overall Satisfaction

The survey asks participants to rate their satisfaction on five dimensions: Arrival, Learning, Living, Support and Overall Satisfaction. The table below provides the scores for each section and the overall satisfaction rating.

	Australia ELB 2009	Australia ELB 2011	Australia ELB 2013	Australia ELB 2016	Australia ELB 2018
Arrival Overall	-	-	90%	92%	93%
Learning Overall	87%	91%	89%	90%	90%
Living Overall	86%	89%	89%	91%	91%
Support Overall	76%	83%	92%	91%	93%
<b>Overall Satisfaction</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>90%</b>

Arrival Overall was introduced as a new measure in 2013 and, despite measuring above the Global ELB in 2016, has increased from 92% to 93%. All other measures remained constant other than Overall Satisfaction, which increased from 89% to 90%. It is worth noting that as satisfaction increases it becomes increasingly difficult to improve already high scores.

None of the measures declined, which is a significant achievement and testament to the success of the initiatives undertaken to improve satisfaction.

Student responses to their study outcomes has been positive, however satisfaction has reduced for the question I feel that my English course offers value for money. Further investigation is required to understand why this has decreased.

	Australia ELB 2009	Australia ELB 2011	Australia ELB 2013	Australia ELB 2016	Australia ELB 2018
I have made progress in learning English since beginning this course of study	91%	94%	91%	91%	92%
I feel that my English course offers value for money	72%	78%	75%	74%	74%
Studying English in this country has been better than I expected	69%	77%	81%	81%	83%

## Profile and Responses

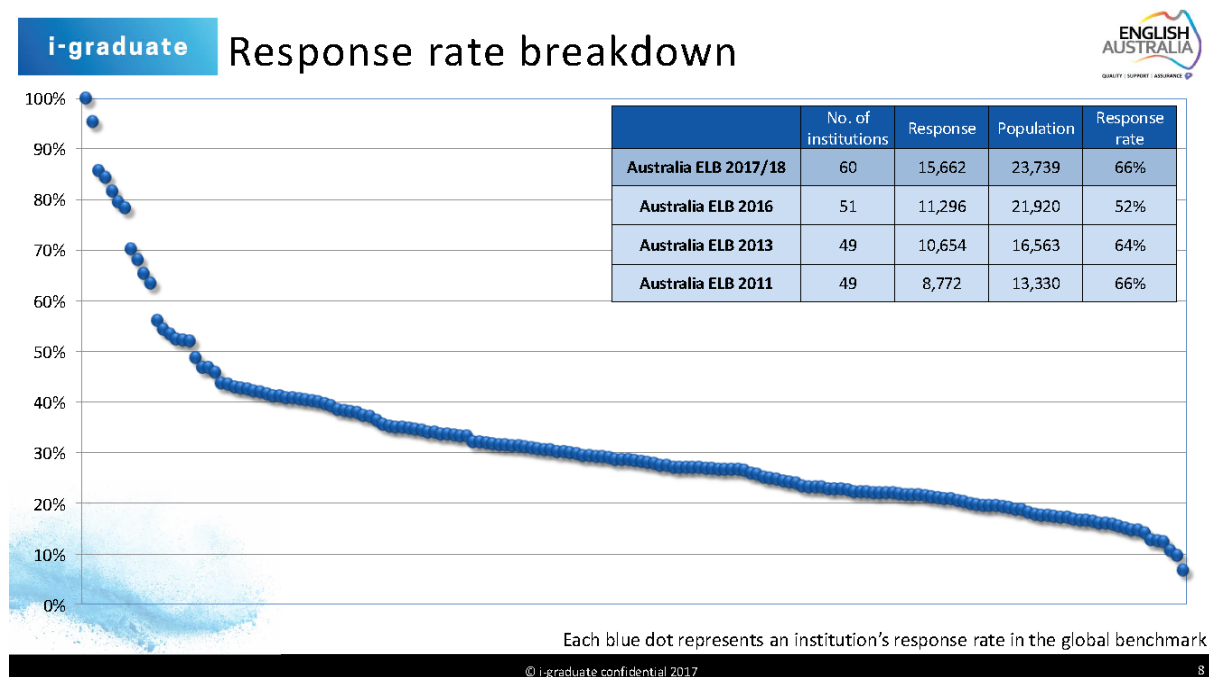
### Representativeness of Sample

66% of invited students participated in the ELB. This equated to 15,662 students across 60 institutions, the highest participation of both students and institutions in the last seven years and the equal highest response rate in that period.

	Australia ELB 2011	Australia ELB 2013	Australia ELB 2016	Australia ELB 2018
Number of Institutions	49	49	51	60
Response	8,772	10,654	11,296	15,662
Population	13,330	16,563	21,920	23,739
Response Rate	66%	64%	52%	66%

The increased response rate from students and colleges is very encouraging, and invaluable in providing greater insight into the behaviours, thoughts and values of the students.

The graph below shows the response rates by institution. One institution – in the top left of the graph – managed a 100% response rate. While the overall response rate was higher than previous years, the distribution of participation is broader. More institutions responded but fewer students responded at each institution.



# **APPENDIX A:**

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## COLLEGES PARTICIPATING IN THE 2017/18 ELB

Colleges		
ACU English Language Centre, Brisbane	Griffith English Language Institute (GELI)	Navitas English Sydney
ACU English Language Centre, Melbourne	Hawthorn Melbourne	QUT International College
ACU English Language Centre, North Sydney	ICTE - UQ	RMIT Training (RMIT English Worldwide)
ANU College	ILSC Brisbane	SELC Australia
Aspire Institute	ILSC Melbourne	TAFE International WA
Australia Pacific College	ILSC Sydney	Taylors College Perth
Bond University College	Intensive English Language Institute	Taylors College Sydney
Cairns Language Centre	International House Sydney	The University of Newcastle Language Centre
Centre for English Language in the University of South Australia	Kaplan International English School Melbourne	The University of Newcastle Language Centre, Sydney
CQUniversity English Language Centre	La Trobe Melbourne	The University of Sydney, Centre for English Teaching
Curtin English	Macquarie Education Group Australia (MEGA)	University Canberra College
Deakin University English Language Institute	Macquarie University English Language Centre	University of Adelaide College
Edith Cowan College	Melbourne Institute of Technology	University of Adelaide English Language Centre
Embassy English	MIT Institute	University of Tasmania, English Language Centre
English Language Centre, University of New England	Monash College Pty Ltd	UNSW Institute of Languages
English Language School in Sydney	Murdoch Institute of Technology	UOW College
Eynesbury College Academy of English	Navitas English Brisbane	UTS Insearch Limited
Flinders International Study Centre	Navitas English Darwin	UWA Centre for English Language Teaching
Government Education & Training International	Navitas English Manly	Victoria University English
Greenwich College	Navitas English Perth	WSU College

## **APPENDIX B:**

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### NAVITAS CENTRE EVALUATIONS ACTION PLAN

Centre:

Date

### Positive feedback

Areas where there is significant and consistent positive feedback from students.

Area	Description / example comment(s)	Cause(s) of feedback	Feedback made available to

### Education services

Comments identifying issues with teaching and learning, courses, self-study, e-learning, exam practice, timetable, etc.

Area	Description / example comment(s)	Cause(s) of feedback	Person(s) responsible	Action by

<b>Student services</b>				
Comments identifying issues with student services, including accommodation, activities, problem resolution, staff and centre organisation.				
Area	Description / example comment(s)	Cause(s) of feedback	Person(s) responsible	Action by

<b>Premises</b>				
Comments identifying issue with premises. Property and/or IT shared services managers may need to be involved in resolution.				
Area	Description / example comment(s)	Cause(s) of feedback	Person(s) responsible	Action by

<b>Mitigation</b>				
Comments identify areas of operations which cannot be readily changed. Mitigation strategies are aimed at minimising adverse impact.				
<b>Area</b>	<b>Description / example comment(s)</b>	<b>Cause(s) of feedback</b>	<b>Person(s) responsible</b>	<b>Action by</b>

## **APPENDIX C:**

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### EVALUATE YOUR CULTURE OF SUPPORT

Business Management			
<i>Senior managers at our institution...</i>	Yes	To some extent	No
• demonstrate a genuine concern for student welfare through sound policies and procedures.			
• are willing to allocate appropriate financial, personnel and material resources to provide support.			
• have identified one manager responsible for the leadership and management of student support services.			
<i>Managers at our institution...</i>	Yes	To some extent	No
• consider the impact of their decisions on students and staff as well as on the financial bottom line.			
• implement policies and procedures that minimise risk to student safety, security and wellbeing			
• ensure there are processes, services and facilities sufficient and appropriate to the number, nature and goals of students, the college programs and location, covering all shifts.			
• implement a continuous improvement cycle of student support programs incorporating a range of stakeholder feedback.			
Organisational culture			
• all those associated with our institution (teachers; managers; student services, marketing and administrative staff; education agents) ...	Yes	To some extent	No
• share an understanding of a positive approach to service, a concern for the individual and overall professionalism.			
• demonstrate fairness, tolerance and a willingness to try and understand another's point of view, especially when English is not their first language.			
• contribute to the planning, evaluation, review and renewal of services to support students in their study experience.			

Information and communication			
<i>At our institution...</i>	Yes	To some extent	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>information about the institution's support policies, services and facilities are available to and shared by all stakeholders.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>information about students' backgrounds, goals, needs and any identified issues and action is collated and stored in an accessible and secure way.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>all staff members are aware of how our institution supports our students, and encourage students to use opportunities.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>communication is effective between teachers, administration and management within the institution, and also between departments of the institution and stakeholders such as students/parents, accommodation providers, U18 guardians and education agents.</li> </ul>			
Staff recruitment and professional development			
<i>Management at our institution...</i>	Yes	To some extent	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>employ staff across the board with appropriate qualifications and experience who have empathy for and understanding of the student experience, plus a willingness to communicate positively with students.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>remunerate specialist staff appropriately for their skills, knowledge and time.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure induction for staff (and for external providers) offers a thorough orientation to their obligations and responsibilities to students under the National Code, ESOS and other local, state/territory and commonwealth legislative requirements.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have a strategic approach to professional development which meets identified needs of staff in supporting students e.g. customer service, cross-cultural awareness and communication and dealing with 'difficult' clients.</li> </ul>			

Facilities			
<i>Our institution...</i>	Yes	To some extent	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identifies a point (or points) for students and staff to access information, guidance and professional assistance re student support.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provides a private, quiet space for counselling students.</li> </ul>			
Networks			
<i>Our institution...</i>	Yes	To some extent	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>has a strong relationship with its education agents and has confidence that the agents will provide accurate information, attempt to manage student expectations and help ensure the student has a positive experience.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>where appropriate, seeks out, works with and uses services offered by local and/or associated organisations eg libraries, counselling and medical facilities, international student hubs at schools, VET colleges and universities.</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>works with a robust network of relevant local and community support institutions and organisations eg police, banks, surf lifesaving, libraries, local, state/territory and commonwealth government departments and bodies with representatives who understand the communication needs of international students.</li> </ul>			



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English Australia is the national peak body  
for the English language sector of international education in Australia.