



# Education Brief – China

November 2015

## Chinese Government Priorities

In July 2010 the Chinese Government released its *National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development for 2010-2020*. The plan identified broad reforms to improve teacher quality (including in regional and remote areas), increase the research capacity of selected universities and support professional development of China's education workforce at all levels. It also set a 4.0% target of Chinese Government expenditure of GDP (which it achieved in 2012); a higher education participation target of 40% by 2020; and a target of attracting 500,000 international students to study in China by 2020, of which at least 150,000 (30%) will be full degree students.

In May 2014, the State Council announced plans to reform the vocational education system with an aim to increase the total number of students enrolled in vocational education to 38.3 million by 2020, transform up to 600 of the country's general universities into polytechnics providing more technical and employment-related courses, and deepen linkages between industry and VET, including encouraging enterprises to establish internships.

China is also seeking to drive its economic growth through innovation and has set ambitious targets of spending the equivalent of 2.5 per cent of GDP on research and development by 2020 and lift overall discipline ranking and publications citations into the world top five.

## Student Mobility

In 2014, there were 121,318 Chinese nationals studying in Australia on a student visa, representing 26.7% of all international students, higher than any other source country. Almost 60 per cent of Chinese students were enrolled in a higher education course of study. Australia continues to be one of the top three most popular study abroad destinations for Chinese students after the United States and the United Kingdom.

According to statistics collected by the Ministry of Education, 4,721 Australian students studied in China in 2014. A national survey of Australian universities found that China was the second most popular destination for Australian students undertaking studies overseas as part of their Australian degree in 2014. In its first year of full implementation, China was the most popular location for New Colombo Plan (NCP) students. With the numbers of NCP supported study experiences to China set to double in 2016, China is likely to become the single most popular study abroad destination for Australian undergraduate students.

In November 2014, Australia and China signed an *Australia-China Memorandum of Understanding on Student, Researcher and Academic Mobility* to support the implementation of the New Colombo Plan in China and facilitate greater two-way mobility of students, researchers and academics.

## Institutional Agreements

According to Universities Australia data, the number of agreements between Chinese and Australian universities covering staff and student exchanges, study abroad and academic/research collaboration increased from 885 to 1,184 between 2012 and 2015.

Currently there are 13 Confucius Institutes and 54 Confucius Classrooms (including independent classrooms and affiliated classrooms) in Australia.

Currently there are 33 Australian Studies Centres in China.

## Joint Cooperative Programs and Schools

There are currently 271 active Sino-Australian joint education programs and institutions approved by the Chinese government. This number includes:

- 3 joint institutions at undergraduate and above level between Australian and Chinese universities: SHU-UTS SILC Business School, Liaoning University-Victoria University, and Southeast University-Monash University graduate-level-only joint school
- 6 joint institutions at below degree level between Australian and Chinese Institutions
  - TAFE Queensland Brisbane and Shanghai Second Polytechnic University
  - Kangan Batman Institute of TAFE and Jiangsu College of Engineering and Technology
  - Western Sydney Institute of TAFE and Ningbo City College of Vocational Technology
  - Melbourne Polytechnic and Minjiang University
  - Holmes Institute and Qingdao University
  - Holmesglen Institute of TAFE and Wuhan Textile University
- 115 Australian and Chinese universities joint programs at bachelor level and above
- 149 joint programs at tertiary education diploma level
- 11 non-award joint programs
- 8 secondary vocational education joint programs
- 9 high school joint programs

According to Australia's National Centre for Vocational Education Research, in 2013, 35,641 Chinese students were enrolled to complete courses being offered in China by 19 Australian public VET providers.

Further information on Australian international education policies and programs is available at <http://www.internationaleducation.gov.au>

## Research collaboration

China is Australia's third most frequent partner for collaboration in scientific research, as measured by the number of joint scientific publications. The number of papers involving Chinese and Australian authors published annually more than doubled between 2009 and 2013 (from 2,118 to 5,290 – source InCitesTM, Thomson Reuters, 2015).

Government-to-government engagement on science stretches back at least three decades, and joint research funding arrangements have been in place continuously since 2001. The Australia-China Science and Research Fund (ACSRF), administered by the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, supports strategic science, technology and innovation collaboration of mutual benefit to Australia and China. The Australian Government has committed \$10 million over four years from 2014-15 to support the participation

of Australian researchers in agreed joint activities, with the Chinese government providing equivalent funding to its researchers.

The ACSRF builds critical mass in areas of strategic priority and supports enduring partnerships between Australian and Chinese researchers. The ACSRF will also facilitate activities that encourage the application and commercialisation of research outcomes to the mutual benefit of both countries and provide early career researchers the opportunity to gain relevant Australia-China research experience.

Further information on the ACSRF is available at <http://www.science.gov.au/acsrp>