



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

International education plan 2022–2027



Context

Western Australia has one of the best performing public school systems and we are uniquely placed to support all children and young people to develop the knowledge, skills and abilities they need to succeed in a globally connected world.

We have a long history of providing education to international students. We have welcomed students from around the world into our schools since the early 1980s.

As a key priority of the Western Australian government, our commitment to international education remains strong and we look forward to contributing to the recovery and growth of the sector in the coming years.

This plan describes our approach to developing and growing international education across the public education system in Western Australia.

Our plan has been developed in the wake of the significant challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic significantly affected international education in public schools throughout 2020, 2021 and 2022. It continues to have an enduring impact.

A new plan for the post-COVID world is needed to support our schools in rebuilding the number of international students in the coming years. The plan not only provides new opportunities for growth but enhances the experience of our international students.

A primary focus of our plan is the development of a contemporary and progressive international education program. It seeks to grow both the number of public schools delivering international education and the number of international students enrolled in public school education.

In the midst of a continually evolving and challenging landscape for international education, our plan sets out a range of practical initiatives that will enable schools to be responsive across a number of priority areas and will position Western Australia as a national leader in providing international school education.

Acknowledging the ongoing impact of the pandemic on the public school system, we will work to support our schools prepare and build capability in their learning programs in the coming months, and support them when ready, to enrol new international students.

Our plan recognises the importance of Canning College as a long-standing and significant provider of education to international students in the public school system in Western Australia. We will work in close collaboration with Canning College to support the development of their program beyond the pandemic.

Fundamental to the success of the plan will be the work we undertake in close collaboration with our partners, TAFE International Western Australia (TIWA) and the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (JTSI).

We will continue to provide our international students with a world-class education that will be a stepping stone to adult life – a life where they can maximise their potential as individuals and as global citizens.

Building the international profile of Western Australian public schools

Objective 1

Grow awareness and lift the international profile of Western Australian public schools through a range of marketing and communication strategies

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the number of international students enrolling in our schools.

Rebuilding our international student enrolments requires the implementation of a range of marketing and communication initiatives. We know that key to ensuring these initiatives are well designed and effectively implemented, is the development of a comprehensive marketing and recruitment strategy to promote the return of international students to our public schools.

The primary focus of this strategy is to position our schools as the most desirable schools in Australia and establish public schools in Perth and Western Australia (WA) as the preferred destination in the minds of prospective students and their parents.

We will:

- develop a new, dynamic and engaging brand that reflects a high-profile, refreshed approach for international education in our schools
- develop a new international education website for public schools that is the key source of information and supports users from research through to enrolment.

Promoting Western Australian public schools in key offshore markets

Objective 2

Grow the number of international students through promotion and international engagement activities, including working with TAFE International Western Australia and the Western Australian Government's offshore network of International Trade Offices

As we recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, identifying and understanding the international markets that offer the greatest opportunity from which we can sustainably grow the number of international students in the future is crucial.

Understanding the motivators, barriers and behaviours for choosing an education destination amongst prospective offshore students, their parents and agents is also key to our efforts to rebuilding the number of international students in our schools.

Gathering information from a range of sources and partners, such as TAFE International Western Australia (TIWA) and the Western Australian (WA) Government's offshore network of investment and trade offices will help identify priority markets and inform the development of plans to implement recruitment activities in these markets.

We know that international engagement is fundamental to implementing these activities and this will be supported through extensive engagement with the state's offshore network of Education Business Development Managers (EBDMs) based in India, China, Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia, South Korea, United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom.

We will:

- undertake market analysis to identify priority markets and develop market plans to drive implementation of in-market activities aimed at rebuilding and growing the number of international students
- undertake market research to uncover the motivators, barriers and behaviours for choosing an education destination with prospective offshore students, their parents and agents
- work closely with TIWA to implement in-market activities supporting the recruitment of international students in priority markets
- actively engage with the WA Government's offshore network of EBDMs to implement a range of in-market activities to promote international education in our schools
- organise and undertake a number of overseas missions in priority offshore markets, to promote international education in WA public schools
- attend and promote our schools at key international trade exhibitions, conferences and seminars.

Providing support to our schools

Objective 3

Increase the number of WA public schools delivering international programs through a range of school support measures and incentives including best-practice guides, professional development programs and marketing support

Schools are at the core of the public education system in WA. We recognise success in delivering high-quality education to a growing number of international students will depend on:

- how we support our schools to build and maintain international education programs
- attracting a broader range and more schools in both metropolitan and regional areas to the international education program.

Many schools have well-established learning programs for international students, while others have less experience and would benefit from support to establish and build international education programs.

In the coming years we will enhance support for public schools in several ways, including best-practice information, professional development programs and marketing support.

We will support this by developing promotional resources which emphasise the unique identity and value proposition of our educational programs.

We will:

- promote the participation of WA public schools in our international education program by providing information to schools on the benefits of delivering international programs
- hosting events with WA public schools to showcase our international education program and promote their participation in delivering international programs
- convene a Principals International Education Advisory Group to share information, identify opportunities and foster a coordinated, strategic and collaborative approach to the development of international education in our schools
- develop a best practice information for schools participating in our international education program, including a checklist and access to resources to support quality of education and student support services
- provide a range of resources for schools to participate in our international education program, including support (for example, individual advice and workshops), marketing resources (for example, digital collateral) and welcome packs for students
- develop a professional development program to support new and existing public schools' participation in our international education program.

Enhancing the student experience

Objective 4

Enhance the experience of international students in our schools through a range of student engagement and support programs and activities

We know that a positive student experience is critical to overall student satisfaction. We also know that word of mouth plays a critical role in the decision-making process of our prospective students. Satisfied students have the potential to become important brand ambassadors for our schools, opening up opportunities for them to positively engage with prospective students.

The reputation of our schools as preferred amongst prospective students and their parents rests on our ability to provide a world-class experience regardless of the school and its location. Ensuring our students have a positive and rewarding experience is a priority and activities that work to enhance this experience form a key focus of this plan.

We know that wellbeing is central to a high-quality study and living experience for our students.

During the pandemic, the wellbeing of our international students was affected, largely by not being able to visit, or receive visits from, family and friends. In response, we implemented a school holiday program involving activities aimed at ensuring students remained safe, active and engaged in the school and local community. Students reported high levels of satisfaction with this program and indicated it had a positive impact on the overall quality of their educational experience.

Based on the lessons learnt from this important outcome, we will continue to support the implementation of initiatives that foster the engagement and wellbeing of our students at all times, including during term, after school, on weekends and through school holiday periods.

We will:

- implement a range of programs to foster ongoing engagement and wellbeing of our current international students, including a focus on preventative mental health strategies
- host a number of annual events for international students in our schools, including a
 - student welcome day
 - end of year thank you event
- establish a student ambassador program, providing our current international students the opportunity to share their experience of studying in our schools with prospective students, through a range of events, activities and projects
- establish an international student alumni program to foster the development of an alumni community that actively engages and promotes education in our schools.

Engaging our agent network

Objective 5

Recognise and support our agents as the key source of international students, by building confidence, growing engagement and rewarding performance

Education agents play an important role in supporting our schools. We know that in recent years agents have accounted for the enrolment of over 75 per cent of our students.

Our agents are valuable partners for our schools providing a range of information and support services to international students including school applications, visa processing, accommodation and travel.

In many cases, agents are the first point of contact prospective students and their parents have with our education system and are central to helping families prepare for their child's journey to Western Australia.

We recognise the importance of our agents in supporting the recovery and growth of international education in our schools. Supporting and strengthening our agent network by building confidence and engagement beyond the pandemic will be essential to rebuilding our student enrolments.

TAFE International Western Australia (TIWA) play a key role in working with our agent network to recruit and place international students into our schools. We will continue to work closely with TIWA to support our network of education agents in guiding international students to study in WA public schools.

We will:

- identify key agent partners in priority markets and establish and maintain a formal scope of engagement (for example, product, destination and application processes and insights)
- ensure agents are equipped to effectively present our learning programs to market (for example, up-to-date digital and physical resources)
- work with TIWA to deliver inbound agent familiarisation visits, including comprehensive site visits to key schools and homestay providers, intensive product training, engagement with students, and, where feasible, interaction with WA universities and TAFE WA Colleges to enhance the broader destination product
- work with TIWA to facilitate access for our agents to up-to-date marketing assets and promotional material and information on school availability
- work with TIWA and JTISI on the development and implementation of enhanced incentives for key agent partners.

Canning College

While the focus of this plan is on all public schools in Western Australia (WA), the plan recognises the importance of Canning College in the delivery of education to international students in the public school system.

Canning College is long standing public school, having been established in 1982. It has been at the forefront of international education in WA, providing education to international students since 1986. It is located adjacent to Curtin University and collaborates closely with WA's public universities in transitioning students to higher education.

Canning College is the only public school in WA that solely provides education to international students. It is the largest provider of international education in the public school system. Canning College is self-sufficient and manages its entire student recruitment and support process, encompassing marketing, admission and enrolment.

Canning College is a central feature of this plan and will play a key role in its successful implementation.

Recognising this importance, we will continue to work in collaboration with Canning College to support recovery and growth beyond the pandemic.

TAFE International Western Australia

TAFE International WA (TIWA) is a key partner in the implementation of this Plan. As part of a long-standing relationship, we will continue to work collaboratively with TIWA to facilitate the recruitment and placement of international students into our schools, including:

- marketing and promotion of programs to prospective students
- managing a network of education agents seeking to place students in our schools
- admission and placement of students into our schools, including receiving and processing applications, issuing offers, and managing fees and charges
- care and welfare of our students including airport pick-up, homestay and activities to ensure students remain safe, active and engaged in the school and local community.

Our targets

Growth in the:

- number of international students enrolled in our schools, both offshore and onshore
- number of accredited schools delivering international programs
- number of agents recruiting international students into our schools
- proportion of international students who are satisfied with studying in our schools.