Country report: Australia

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Liz Campbell-Dorning
Director
Educational & Professional Recognition Unit (AEI-NOOSR)
Europe, Americas and Multilateral Branch
International Group
elizabeth.campbell-dorning@education.gov.au
Introduction

- Australia is party to the 1983 Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific, which it ratified in 1985.
- Australia is also party to the 1997 Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, which it ratified in 2003.
- Competent recognition authorities in Australia:
  - study = education providers
  - employment = registration/licensing authorities, employers
  - migration = Department of Immigration and Border Protection and approved assessing authorities
Recognition for study purposes

• Australian higher education institutions are autonomous recognition decision-makers that assess:
  • foreign school leaving certificates
  • foreign undergraduate qualifications
  • foreign postgraduate qualifications
  • Australian and foreign prior learning
• Recognition decisions are supported by information and advice from Australia’s national information centre
• Comparability of a foreign qualification is one of the many factors in the admissions process
  • Other factors include: English language competency, work experience, research experience, grades, prerequisite subjects
International student enrolments in Australia

![Bar chart showing enrolments over years with categories for Postgraduate and Undergraduate.](image-url)
Recognition for professional purposes

- Registration/licensing authorities are autonomous recognition decision-makers established by law
- Procedures for recognition of foreign qualifications to practice a profession vary, but usually include:
  - assessment of qualifications
  - assessment of work experience
  - competency exams
- Access to employment in a professional field requires:
  - for regulated professions: registration/licensing with the appropriate authority
  - for non-regulated professions: membership of the relevant professional body
Bilateral and multilateral recognition agreements

• Australia has 32 bilateral agreements covering a range of education and training issues with 24 economies in:
  • Asia-Pacific
  • Europe
  • Americas
  • Middle East

• Australia also participates in multilateral initiatives which promote mobility, including APEC and EAS
National information centre

- Australia’s national information centre is the Educational & Professional Recognition team in the Department of Education
- It supports student and labour mobility by:
  - providing information on the comparability of foreign qualifications
  - promoting recognition of Australian qualifications in other countries
  - engaging with national information centres to improve qualifications recognition activities
  - supporting recognition decision-makers through:
    - Country Education Profiles
    - advisory service
    - training
Australian Qualifications Framework

- Introduced in 1995 and revised in 2011
- Supports national consistency and recognition within and beyond Australia
- Promotes a shared understanding of what a qualification means and what a graduate can do
- 10 levels and 14 qualification types across the school, vocational education & training and higher education sectors
- Specifies learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, application of knowledge and skills) for each AQF level and qualification type
- Provides flexible and transparent learning pathways between education sectors
- Integral to quality assurance and regulation systems
Ratification of the 2011 Revised Convention

• Australia completed the ratification process in May 2014
• Our instrument of ratification was deposited with the Director-General of UNESCO in July 2014
• Australia looks forward to cooperation and information exchange between parties to the 2011 Revised Convention
  • network of Asia-Pacific national information centres
  • annual meetings to support improved recognition practices
  • staff exchange and other learning opportunities
  • inter-regional cooperation