My life is now over the ocean, my folks are now over the sea—a practitioner’s view of international students’ career choices

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Career choice – broadly defined. All steps/decisions an individual takes along their career path.
International student = international graduate = client
Career practitioner here includes career and vocational advisors, counsellors, etc.

Our roles and responsibilities as career practitioners meeting clients at different points in their life
How can we act and co-operate in the best interest of our clients

Australian context with 2017 figures

624,001 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN AUSTRALIA
REPRESENTING 194 NATIONALITIES

799,371 INTERNATIONAL ENROLMENTS
International students are studying in the Higher Education, VET, Schools, English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) and Non-award sectors.
There are more enrolments than students since a student can study in more than one course in one calendar year.

Major source countries

Country distribution with top 5

China India Nepal Malaysia Brazil All other countries
Chinese context

Outbound students - 523,700
31% in USA, 27% in Australia, 20% in UK
Inbound students - 397,635

MoE data 2015

Journey away from home

Home Country - International Experience - Home Country

What is the career practitioners’ role during this journey?

Students’ Network

Push and pull factors

Global workforce Global skills Gig economy
Employability skills Transferable skills Soft skills
Skill Shortage Brain drain Brain gain
PR TR Culture shock Reverse culture shock
Passion Dreams EI SI CI
Big 4 Investment Banks marriage
SOMETIMES ANYWHERE NOMADS SEATURTLES
Weighing it all up

Duties to family
Pragmatism, practicalities
Risk aversion
Disengagement

Dreams, aspirations
Drive for self actualisation
Risk taking
Engagement, purpose

Our path to the student

Advisors
Friends, society
Family
Student

The four type of As

ambassador
adventurer
apprentice
anchor

“The Start-Up of You”

‘What’s required now is an entrepreneurial mindset ... if you want to seize the new opportunities ... you need to think like you are running a start-up: your career ... this means you need to be adapting all the time. And if you fail to adapt, no one – not your employer, not the government – is going to catch you when you fail.’

Case Study 1: Thomas from Germany
- Bachelor of Int. Bus in home country
- M. Accounting in Melbourne
- Speaks Mandarin
- Attempted IELTS four times, trying for band 8 in all four skills for Au PR visa. Didn’t succeed.
- Tutor job at the University
- Got a job offer with a Big 4 Company in a major European city.
- Didn’t accept European job offer
- Fifth time lucky with IELTS! Got 4x8
- Permanent Residency visa granted
- Employed by a Big 4 in Melbourne
- Married intern student from an Asian country and eyes still on Asia.
- Aiming for transfer to Singapore.

Case Study 2: Mary from China
- Bachelor of Finance in China
- M of Mgmt (Acc & Fin) in Melbourne
- Internship in China Construction Bank
- Banking internship in Melbourne
- Part-time marketing job in Melbourne
- Accomplished violin player – orchestra
- Golden Key Society member & volunteer
- Ph.D offer in Melbourne
- Good job prospects in China too
- Decided to try for PR and got it
- Works in a large financial institution in Melbourne in superannuation
- Return to China later as an ‘expert’ is considered

Case Study 3: James from China
- Bachelor in Business joint China-Australia degree (2+2)
- Master of Finance in Melbourne
- Participant in the first international online internship doing Chinese market analysis
- Applied for jobs widely – Australia, China, HK, etc.
- Graduate role at HSBC Hong Kong
- Later moved to Shanghai.
- Now in senior role moving between locations.

Case Study 4: Patrick from Malaysia
- Foundation studies, Bachelor of Commerce, Master of Management (Acc) in Melbourne (6 years)
- Keen golfer
- Graduate role in Deloitte (Melbourne)
- Didn’t enjoy work in this firm
- Went back to KL to assist parents in their business re-structure
- Spent 3-4 years in KL, working in family business
- Returned to Australia, sister lives in Melbourne
- Job search, re-adjustment
- Working happily at a big 4 Australian bank now
Our mission is accomplished...

...when our graduates know themselves, know what they want, know how to get it, know how to do it well, and build sustainable careers.

Thank you for your attention and participation.