

**Tracking the relative success of International students
entering LTU undergraduate programs in 2005 and 2006, during
their first year of study
(Foundation studies vs other international vs local)**

The 2005 AUQA report queried the IELTS entry score applied by La Trobe, particularly in the context of the Diploma of Business Administration, which normally has an entry score of 5.5, (but which was lowered to 5.0 in the program in Vietnam to build numbers). The issue was also raised in the context of the Mandarin language MBA in Australia. The following recommendation was made by AUQA.

AUQA recommends that La Trobe University reconsider the application of its English language entrance standards in light of the overall demands of the teaching, reading materials and assessment methods.

An analysis was conducted comparing performance, against domestic students, of international students entering undergraduate programs at LTU via:

- the LTU Foundation Studies Program which has an IELTS entry score of 5.5
- normal international entry, with a minimum entry score of 6.0

The following measures of performance were used.

Success rate – average of the percentage of EFTSL passed for each student in the commencing year

Marks – average of the student's average mark in units with a passed grade in the commencing year

Inverse attrition - proportion of students who returned in the following year or who completed a course in that year (provisional Oct 2007)

A summary of University level results is provided below.

	2005				2006			
	Commencing	Success rate	Mark	Inverse Attrition	Commencing	Success rate	Mark	Inverse Attrition
Entry via Foundation Studies	94	84.9	66.9	0.88	71	83.1	65.2	0.90
Other international	1151	82.8	65.8	0.91	1238	82.2	65.1	0.91
Total international	1245	82.9	65.9	0.91	1309	82.3	65.1	0.91
Local	5485	81.9	68.0	0.82	6547	83.2	68.2	0.83

In both 2005 and 2006, **inverse attrition rates** are better than local students for international students in total, and also for the subset of foundation studies entries. Compared to local students, in both years **marks** are slightly lower for international students in total, but the subset of foundation studies students perform slightly better

than other international students. In 2005 the **success rates** for foundation studies students are higher than for other international students as well as being higher than local students. In 2006 the foundation studies students perform slightly less well than local students on this indicator, but outperform other international students.

On the basis of the information over these two years, at University level **international students entering via foundation studies, with the lower IELTS score of 5.5, appear to be performing satisfactorily** in relation to international students entering with an IELTS score of at least 6.0, and also in relation to local students. From this limited data, it may be concluded that the preparation of students via the Foundation Year is adequate for university study. (It is still not clear whether these Foundation year figures include Diploma students as the raw data does not appear to differentiate).

Where are the Foundation Studies students?

	2005				2006			
	Via Foundation Studies	Other International	Total International	Local	Via Foundation Studies	Other International	Total International	Local
FOE	0	2	2	350	0	5	5	403
FHS	11	106	117	1230	4	173	177	1567
FHUSS	13	36	49	1192	5	41	46	1392
FLM	42	837	879	1446	46	860	906	1884
FSTE	28	170	198	1267	16	159	175	1301
TOTAL	94	1151	1245	5485	71	1238	1309	6547

Faculty of Law and Management attracts most of the Foundation Studies graduates with Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering following second. There are limited undergraduate programs in Faculty of Education (located at the Bendigo campus), so this faculty has less opportunity to attract students via this path.

The analysis of 2007 data will also reveal whether there is a continuing downward trend in students enrolling in LTU programs via the foundation studies programs.

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