

## International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview

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## Abstract

The internationalisation of Higher Education (HE) has witnessed a significant shift with the growing prominence of Private Higher Education Institutions (PrHEIs) in attracting international students. This paper examines the global flow of international students within PrHEIs, exploring the key drivers, socio-economic impacts, and future trajectories of this phenomenon. By analysing relevant statistical data from international organisations and national agencies, coupled with a systematic review of academic literature, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the dynamics shaping international student mobility within the private higher education sector. It focuses on five key countries, including the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and the UAE, highlighting the diverse contexts and institutional strategies that influence international student enrolment in PrHEIs. The paper concludes by discussing the implications for policy, institutional management, and future research in the context of increasing globalisation and marketisation of Private.

**Keywords:** International Students, Private Higher Education Institutions (PrHEIs), Global Mobility, A Five Country overview- The USA, The UK, Canada, Australia and The UAE,

# International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview

## 1. Introduction

Private higher education (PrHE) has become an integral and rapidly expanding segment of the global Higher Education (HE) landscape, driven by liberalisation, privatisation, and marketisation policies (Qureshi & Khawaja, 2021). The increasing enrolment in Private Higher Education Institutions (PrHEIs) reflects their growing role in global tertiary education, with over 30% of total HE enrolment worldwide occurring in PrHEIs (Altbach, 2009; Levy, 2020). Many countries have transitioned from higher education systems where private providers were marginal or non-existent to models in which PrHEIs are recognised as key contributors to educational provision (Levy, 2006).

The transformation of the higher education sector has been characterised by increased international student mobility and the rising prominence of PrHEIs. While Public Higher Education Institutions (PuHEIs) have traditionally been the primary destinations for international students, private institutions have emerged as significant alternatives, offering diverse programmes and institutional structures tailored to the evolving needs of a global student population (Marginson, 2018). The marketisation of HE, coupled with the rising demand for specialised and flexible programmes, has further driven the expansion of PrHEIs (Qureshi & Khawaja, 2021). These institutions often provide niche programmes, smaller class sizes, and a more personalised learning experience, attracting students seeking alternatives to traditional public universities (Wilkins, 2017).

The following five countries are selected for analysis, representing diverse geographical regions:

1. **The United States:** A mature PrHEI sector with a wide range of institutions, including for-profit universities and specialised colleges.
2. **The United Kingdom:** A growing PrHEI sector, particularly in business and management education.
3. **Canada:** Increasing number of private career colleges and specialised institutions.
4. **Australia:** Significant growth in private vocational and HE providers.
5. **The United Arab Emirates:** Emerged as a significant hub for international branch campuses and private universities in the region.

Each region representing a distinct model of Private Higher Education (PrHE). The United States has a mature and diverse PrHE sector, encompassing elite institutions, for-profit universities, and specialised colleges. The United Kingdom has seen recently substantial growth in its PrHE sector, a two decades ago there was only one private higher education institution (The University of Buckingham) and now the country has more than 10 PrHEIs (Qureshi, 2020). Majority of PrHEIs particularly in business and management education, reflecting the increasing demand for alternative higher education pathways. Canada, while traditionally known for its strong public university system, has witnessed a rise in private career colleges and specialised institutions catering to both domestic and international students (Qureshi, 2023).

## **International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview**

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Similarly, Australia has experienced notable expansion in its private vocational and higher education sectors, providing international students with diverse learning opportunities. Meanwhile, the United Arab Emirates has positioned itself as a regional hub for international branch campuses and private universities, leveraging its strategic location and investment in transnational education.

By providing a comparative analysis of these five countries, this study aims to explore the factors driving the expansion of PrHE, and the implications for global education mobility. Through this analysis, the paper contributes to provide an overview of PrHEs in these five regions and the evolving landscape of higher education worldwide.

### **2. Literature Review**

The theoretical framework underpinning this study draws from the literature on international student mobility and marketisation of HE. International student mobility is often analysed through the lens of push-pull factors, wherein students are pushed from their home countries due to limited opportunities and pulled towards host countries offering better academic and career prospects (Altbach, 2015).

#### **2.1. International Student Mobility**

Internationally mobile students are individuals who have physically crossed an international border between two countries with the objective to participate in educational activities in the country of destination, where the country of destination of a given student is different from their country of origin (UNESCO UIS n.d.).

The movement of individuals across international borders for the purpose of pursuing HE has become an increasingly prominent feature of the global landscape. Recent data underscores the substantial scale and continued growth of this phenomenon. In 2022, the estimated number of international students worldwide reached 6.9 million, marking a remarkable 176% increase over the 2.5 million students recorded in 2002 (UNESCO, 2024). This exponential growth over the past two decades signifies a profound shift in how individuals perceive and access HE, with international study emerging as a widely accepted and sought-after pathway for personal and professional development (OECD, 2024). This escalating trend suggests a fundamental transformation in the global educational landscape, driven by factors such as enhanced interconnectedness, the perceived advantages of internationally recognised qualifications (Cialfo, 2024; OECD, 2024), and the expansion of higher education opportunities across the globe (OECD, 2024; The PIE News, 2024).

The United States remains a leading destination for international students, as evidenced by the record high of over 1.1 million international students hosted by its higher education institutions during the 2023/2024 academic year (Institute of International Education, 2024). The consistent growth in international student enrolment in the U.S. to unprecedented levels indicates its continued dominance in the global market, likely due to the perceived quality of its academic programmes (Harvard Business School, 2024; St. John's University, 2024; Boundless, 2023), extensive research opportunities, and the availability of post-study work options (Harvard Business School, 2024; St. John's University, 2024).

## International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview

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Contributing significantly to this global mobility are students from India, whose interest in studying abroad continues to rise (Batra, 2024). Data from the Open Doors Report reveals a substantial increase in the number of Indian students pursuing higher education in the United States, from 268,923 in 2023 to 331,602 in 2024, representing a notable 23.3% growth (Batra, 2024; Institute of International Education, 2024). This dramatic increase underscores the evolving dynamics of sending countries and the growing aspirations of Indian students for international education, particularly at the graduate level, suggesting a drive for specialised knowledge and enhanced career prospects (Batra, 2024; Institute of International Education, 2024).

While traditional Anglophone destinations remain popular, the global landscape of international student mobility is also witnessing a diversification of choices (ApplyBoard, 2024). In 2024, countries such as New Zealand, Poland, Mexico, Chile, and Spain exhibited the highest year-over-year growth rates in inbound international students (ApplyBoard, 2024). This emergence of new and rapidly expanding destinations indicates a potential shift in student preferences, possibly influenced by factors beyond traditional reputation, such as affordability, specific programme strengths offered by these alternative locations, or potentially more accessible visa policies (ApplyBoard, 2024).

However, a closer examination reveals nuances within this overall growth (Jack, 2024). A global survey conducted in 2024 indicated that 41% of institutions reported a decrease in international postgraduate student intake compared to 2023, with significant declines observed in Canada (27%), the UK (18%), and the US (6%) (Jack, 2024). This suggests that while overall international student numbers might be high, there are specific challenges or changing preferences at the postgraduate level in some major destination countries, potentially due to evolving government policies or increasing concerns about affordability and post-study opportunities (Jack, 2024).

### 3. A Five-Country Overview

This study examines the role of PrHEIs in five key countries—the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and the United Arab Emirates—each representing distinct models of PrHE.

#### 3.1. The United States

The US higher education system is one of the most diverse and expansive in the world, distinguished by the significant role played by private institutions, encompassing a broad range of institutions that cater to various academic and professional aspirations., distinguished by the significant role played by private institutions.

While public universities receive state and federal funding, PrHEIs play a crucial role in shaping the educational landscape. Private colleges and universities, which include prestigious Ivy League institutions, liberal arts colleges, and specialised professional schools, operate independently of direct government control and rely primarily on tuition, endowments, and private donations. These institutions often boast smaller class sizes, rigorous academic programmes, and significant financial resources, which enable them to offer competitive scholarships and cutting-edge research opportunities. Private higher

## International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview

education in the US also contributes to global student mobility, attracting many international students due to its academic excellence and innovation reputation. However, the high cost of tuition at private institutions remains a point of debate, raising concerns about accessibility and student debt. Despite these challenges, private higher education plays a pivotal role in maintaining the US higher education system's quality, diversity, and competitiveness

**Table 01: Top Ten PrHEIs in the US**

S.NO	Name	City	State
1	Harvard University	Cambridge	Massachusetts
2	Stanford University	Stanford	California
3	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Cambridge	Massachusetts
4	Yale University	New Haven	Connecticut
5	Duke University	Durham	North Carolina
6	Brown University	Providence	Rhode Island
7	California Institute of Technology	Pasadena	California
8	Princeton University	Princeton	New Jersey
9	Johns Hopkins University	Baltimore	Maryland
10	Northwestern University	Evanston	Illinois

Source: The Times Higher Education, (2021)

The US HE landscape is characterised by a significant presence of private universities, many of which consistently achieve preeminent positions in global rankings. Institutions such as Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Stanford University, and Yale University exemplify this trend. These institutions, operating outside of direct state funding, rely predominantly on a diversified income stream, with student tuition fees forming a substantial component. This financial model facilitates distinct operational characteristics that may contribute to their academic prominence.

Private universities in states such as California, New York, and Massachusetts have historically been significant destinations for international students. In the 2022/2023 academic year, California hosted 138,393 international students, leading the nation, followed by New York with 126,981, and Massachusetts with 71,098 (Statista, 2023). These states are home to prestigious private institutions that attract a substantial number of these students. For instance, Columbia University in New York City reported that 18.1% of its undergraduate population were international students (College Rover, 2023). The economic contributions of international students are considerable. During the 2023/2024 academic year, international students contributed over \$50 billion to the U.S. economy, supporting both academic institutions and their surrounding communities ([studyinthestates.dhs.gov](https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov)). This influx of funds benefits local economies, particularly in areas with a high concentration of private universities. The number of international graduate students in the United States reached a record high of 502,291 in the 2023/2024 academic year, marking an 8% increase from the previous year (pr newswire, 2024). This trend is significant as many leading research-intensive institutions in the U.S. are private universities, which rely on graduate students for research and teaching assistance. The presence of international graduate students enhances the research output and global engagement of these institutions, contributing to their academic excellence.



## International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview

### 3.2. The United Kingdom

The UK higher education system is globally renowned for its academic excellence, research contributions, and diverse institutional landscape. The PrHEIs often termed "alternative providers," occupy a distinct, albeit evolving, role. While public universities, funded through government grants and tuition fees, dominate the sector, PrHEIs have been steadily growing in significance. These private institutions, which operate independently of direct government funding, offer a range of degree programmes, professional qualifications, and specialised training tailored to industry needs. They provide greater flexibility in course delivery, often catering to international students and working professionals through innovative teaching methods, such as blended and online learning. Unlike their public counterparts, PrHEIs in the UK rely primarily on tuition fees and private investment, leading to debates over affordability, regulation, and quality assurance. Despite these challenges, the sector has played a crucial role in expanding access to higher education and fostering innovation in programme delivery. As the demand for alternative and career-focused education pathways increases, PrHEIs continue to complement the traditional university model, contributing to the diversity and competitiveness of the UK's higher education landscape.

The following table 02 presents a selection of PrHEIs operating within the UK, characterised by their diverse academic foci and operational models. These institutions, often classified as alternative providers, contribute to the pluralistic nature of the UK's tertiary education sector.

**Table 02: Top Ten PrHEIs in the UK**

PrHEI	Distinctive Features	Academic Focus
<b>1.Arden University</b>	Primarily online delivery, flexible learning models, focus on accessibility for working professionals.	Business, law, healthcare, psychology, and social sciences.
<b>2.BPP University</b>	Specialises in professional education, strong ties to industry, emphasis on practical skills development.	Law, business, finance, accountancy, and healthcare.
<b>3.European School of Economics</b>	International focus, emphasis on entrepreneurial education, global campuses.	Business, management, marketing, finance, and media.
<b>4.Plymouth Marjon University</b>	Emphasis on sports, health, and education, strong community engagement.	Sports science, health and wellbeing, education, and the arts.
<b>5.Regent's University London</b>	International student body, liberal arts focus, located in central London.	Business, fashion and design, film and media, liberal arts, and psychotherapy.
<b>6.Richmond, The American International University</b>	American liberal arts education within a UK context, dual degree programmes.	Liberal arts, business, economics, international relations, and communications.
<b>7.St Mary's University</b>	Catholic foundation, broad range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, strong sporting heritage.	Sports science, theology, humanities, social sciences, and education.
<b>8.The London Institute of Banking and Finance</b>	Specializes in banking and finance education, professional qualifications, and corporate training.	Banking, finance, financial technology, and related professional disciplines.
<b>9.The University of Law</b>	Focus on legal education, practical training, strong connections to legal profession.	Legal practice, law conversion courses, and postgraduate legal studies.
<b>10.University of Buckingham</b>	Independent university, shorter degree programmes, emphasis on teaching quality.	Law, business, humanities, medicine, and computing.

Source: Author's selection

## International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview

### 3.3. Canada

The Canadian higher education system is recognised for its quality, accessibility, and strong emphasis on research and innovation. While many post-secondary institutions in Canada are publicly funded and regulated by provincial governments, PrHEIs also play a growing role in the sector. These private institutions, which include specialised colleges, career-focused universities, and religiously affiliated schools, operate independently of direct government funding and rely primarily on tuition fees and private investment. Unlike their public counterparts, PrHE providers in Canada often offer flexible learning options, including online and accelerated programmes, catering to international students and working professionals seeking industry-specific training. However, the sector faces challenges related to regulation, accreditation, and public perception, as PrHEIs do not always receive the same level of recognition as public universities. Despite these challenges, PrHEIs contribute to the diversity of Canada's post-secondary landscape by expanding access to alternative educational pathways and meeting the demands of a rapidly evolving job market. As Canada continues to attract international students, the role of private institutions in complementing the public system is expected to grow.

**Table 03: Number of private post-secondary institutions as of 2023**

Province/Territory	Universities	Colleges	Career colleges	Language schools	Theological schools	International institutions	Total
Alberta	9	14	221	17	16	6	283
British Columbia	11	11	299	36	15	0	372
Manitoba	5	9	61	4	2	0	81
New Brunswick	4	5	45	1	2	0	57
Newfoundland and Labrador	0	0	21	0	1	0	22
Northwest Territories	0	2	1	0	1	0	4
Nova Scotia	0	0	39	7	0	0	46
Nunavut	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ontario	6	19	688	44	22	4	783
Prince Edward Island	0	0	17	1	0	0	18
Quebec	1	78	0	21	7	0	107
Saskatchewan	0	4	30	0	4	0	38
Yukon	0	0	4	0	0	0	4

*Source:* Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC,2023).

Table 03, as presented by the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC, 2023), offers a quantitative overview of the distribution of private post-secondary institutions across Canadian provinces and territories as of 2023. This table categorises institutions into six distinct types: Universities, Colleges, Career Colleges, Language Schools, Theological Schools, and International Institutions, allowing for a granular analysis of the private post-secondary landscape.

A notable observation is the significant variance in the concentration of private institutions across regions. Ontario exhibits the highest total number of private post-secondary institutions (783), predominantly driven by the substantial presence of Career Colleges (688).



## International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview

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This highlights the prominence of vocational and skills-based training within Ontario's private sector. Similarly, British Columbia demonstrates a robust private post-secondary sector, with 372 institutions, again largely attributed to the prevalence of Career Colleges (299). Alberta also presents a considerable number of private institutions, with 283 institutions, following the same trend of Career Colleges being the largest category.

Conversely, certain provinces and territories, such as the Atlantic provinces (Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island) and the northern territories (Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon), display a comparatively limited presence of private post-secondary institutions. This may reflect regional variations in economic activity, population density, and the demand for specialised training programmes.

The table also reveals the relative scarcity of private universities across Canada, with Ontario and British Columbia having the highest numbers (6 and 11, respectively). This underscores the dominance of publicly funded universities in the Canadian higher education system. Furthermore, the distribution of Language Schools and Theological Schools indicates regional differences in cultural and religious demographics.

In summary, Table 03 provides a valuable snapshot of the distribution and typology of private post-secondary institutions in Canada, revealing significant regional disparities and highlighting the prominence of Career Colleges as a key component of the private sector. This data contributes to a broader understanding of the diverse landscape of Canadian post-secondary education.

### 3.4. Australia

The Australian higher education system is globally recognised for its academic excellence, strong research output, and substantial international student enrolment. While public universities dominate the sector, private higher education institutions (PrHEIs) have expanded significantly, offering specialised, flexible, and industry-focused education. Operating independently of government funding, these institutions rely primarily on tuition fees and private investment. They encompass private universities, independent higher education providers, and vocational education colleges, many of which cater to international students and professionals seeking skill-based training (Marginson, 2018).

PrHEIs play a vital role in diversifying the sector by offering niche programmes, personalised learning experiences, and innovative delivery methods such as online and blended learning (Norton & Cherastidham, 2019). Their industry-aligned curricula and focus on practical skills development attract a diverse student body, contributing to Australia's reputation as a global education hub (Baas, 2010). Despite challenges related to accreditation, public perception, and competition with established public universities, private institutions enhance accessibility and address evolving workforce demands. As the sector continues to grow, PrHEIs are expected to further contribute to the expansion and internationalisation of Australian higher education (Hurley et al., 2021).

## International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview

**Table 04: Top Ten PrHEIs in Australia**

S.NO	Name
1	Bond University
2	University of Notre Dame Australia
3	Torrens University Australia
4	Melbourne Institute of Technology (MIT)
5	Charles Darwin University
6	Kaplan Business School
7	Billy Blue College of Design
8	Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School
9	Australian College of the Arts
10	Australian College of Applied Psychology

Source: Author's selection

### 3.5. The United Arab Emirates (UAE)

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has witnessed a rapid expansion of its higher education sector, with a particularly notable growth in PrHEIs. These entities, operating alongside a smaller number of public universities, play a critical role in diversifying educational offerings and catering to the nation's increasingly internationalised student body. Characterised by their focus on specialised programmes, often in partnership with prestigious international universities, and their responsiveness to the demands of the regional labour market, private higher education institutions in the UAE contribute significantly to the development of a skilled workforce. Subject to rigorous quality assurance frameworks and operating within a context of strategic national development, these institutions reflect the UAE's commitment to building a knowledge-based economy and establishing itself as a regional hub for higher learning.

The UAE hosts a variety of PrHEIs that cater to diverse academic and professional interests. The higher education system in the UAE has experienced significant growth and diversification, positioning the country as a regional hub for academic excellence and innovation. While public universities play a crucial role in national education, PrHEIs have expanded rapidly, offering a diverse range of programmes tailored to both local and international students (Nuseir & El-Refae, 2021). These private institutions include international branch campuses, independent universities, and specialised colleges that provide globally recognised degrees and industry-aligned curricula (Rutledge & Kaabi, 2023). The UAE government has actively encouraged the development of private higher education to enhance accessibility, attract foreign investment, and align academic offerings with national economic goals (Shomotova & Karabchuk, 2022). Moreover, private universities contribute to the country's reputation as an education hub by fostering a multicultural learning environment and leveraging advanced technologies in teaching and research (Ibrahim & Barnawi, 2022). Despite challenges related to accreditation, quality assurance, and market competition, private higher education continues to play a critical role in shaping the UAE's knowledge-based economy and supporting its long-term development objectives.

## International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview

**Table 05: Top Ten PrHEIs in the UAE**

S.NO	Name	Location
1	The American University in the Emirates	Dubai
2	Abu Dhabi University	Abu Dhabi
3	The American University of Sharjah	Sharjah
4	The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management	Dubai
5	Al Ghurair University	Dubai
6	Manipal Academy of Higher Education	Dubai
7	Ajman University	Ajman
8	Middlesex University	Dubai
9	Murdoch University	Dubai
10	Al Ain University	Al Ain

Source: Author's selection

### 4. Discussion

The United States presents a unique context within this global trend. Unlike many other industrialised nations such as Canada, Australia, or the UK, the US offers private investors unparalleled opportunities to establish and own fully private universities (BPPE Consulting, 2024; Tilak, 2008). This favourable policy environment in the US, which allows for complete private ownership and the operation of for-profit entities (BPPE Consulting, 2024; Oklahoma Historical Society, 2024; Tilak, 2008), makes it a particularly attractive location for private higher education ventures, likely contributing to its capacity to host a large number of international students (Institute of International Education, 2024).

In the United Kingdom, the private higher education sector has experienced notable expansion since 2010 (Waters & Brooks, 2011; Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2011; Hillman, 2024; UK Parliament, 2015), largely driven by deliberate government policies aimed at fostering greater choice and competition within the higher education market (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2011; House of Commons Library, 2024). These policies have included increasing the maximum tuition fee loan available to students at eligible private providers and easing the criteria for institutions to gain university status (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2011; House of Commons Library, 2024). This strategic move by the UK government reflects an intention to diversify its higher education offerings and potentially cater to a broader spectrum of learners, including international students seeking specialised programmes or alternative pedagogical approaches (Waters & Brooks, 2011; Cialfo, 2024).

Canada's higher education landscape, while dominated by public institutions, also includes a growing, albeit relatively smaller, private postsecondary sector, particularly in the form of private career colleges (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2024; Qureshi, 2023; Skolnik, 2010; Statistics Canada, 2022; Statistics Canada, 2024a). These colleges often focus on providing short, non-degree-level programmes tailored to specific career and vocational training needs (Skolnik, 2010; Studies in Australia, 2024), and they have become a notable destination for international students seeking particular skills or pathways to employment (Legusov et al., 2023; Skolnik, 2010; Statistics Canada, 2024a).

## International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview

While the overall enrolment of international students in Canadian private colleges is lower compared to public institutions (Legusov et al., 2023; Statistics Canada, 2024a), their concentration in certain institutions and fields of study, such as business (Legusov et al., 2023; Statistics Canada, 2024a), is noteworthy.

Australia has witnessed a substantial surge in the growth of private higher education institutions over the past two decades (Bennett et al., 2012; Darlo Higher Education, 2024; Shah & Brown, 2009). This expansion has been significantly fuelled by government policies that broadened access to publicly funded subsidised student loans, such as the FEE-HELP scheme (Bennett et al., 2013; Shah & Brown, 2009), and by the increasing demand for higher education that public universities alone could not fully accommodate (Bennett et al., 2013; Darlo Higher Education, 2024; Shah & Brown, 2009). As a result, Australia's private higher education sector has become a significant player in both the national and international education markets, offering a diverse range of specialist programmes and flexible delivery options (Bennett et al., 2013; Studies in Australia, 2024).

The United Arab Emirates presents a unique case, with its higher education sector being described as predominantly private (QAHE, 2024; Ashour & Kleimann, 2024). This structure has been intentionally fostered by state policies over the past four decades to enhance the UAE's global competitiveness and increase the participation of its citizens in the local and global economy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, 2024; QAHE, 2024). The UAE government actively encourages private investment in higher education and has attracted numerous international universities to establish branch campuses within the country (ICEF Monitor, 2025; Juwai.asia, 2024a; Ministry of Education, UAE, 2024; QAHE, 2024; Remitly, 2025). This strategic focus on internationalisation (QAHE, 2024; Remitly, 2025;) and private provision has positioned the UAE as a burgeoning regional education hub (ICEF Monitor, 2025; Juwai.asia, 2025; Ministry of Education, UAE, 2024; QAHE, 2024; Remitly, 2025), particularly appealing to international students seeking globally recognised degrees in an English-speaking environment (Juwai.asia, 2025; Leap Scholar, 2024; Remitly, 2025).

### 5. Conclusion

The growing significance of Private Higher Education Institutions (PrHEIs) in the global higher education landscape reflects a broader shift driven by marketisation, internationalisation, and increasing student mobility. This study has provided a comparative analysis of the PrHEI sectors in five key countries—the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and the United Arab Emirates—each exhibiting distinct models of private higher education. While the United States maintains a well-established private sector, offering a diverse range of institutions from elite universities to for-profit colleges, the United Kingdom has witnessed substantial growth in private providers, particularly in business and management education. Canada's private sector remains focused on career-

## **International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview**

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oriented colleges, whereas Australia has experienced rapid expansion in private vocational and higher education providers.

The UAE, in contrast, has positioned itself as a regional hub for transnational education, attracting international branch campuses and private universities catering to a global student market.

Despite variations in regulatory frameworks, financial structures, and institutional models, a common trend across these countries is the increasing reliance on private institutions to meet the rising demand for higher education. PrHEIs have played a crucial role in offering alternative pathways for international students, providing niche programmes, flexible learning options, and globally recognised qualifications. However, challenges persist, including concerns over quality assurance, tuition affordability, and regulatory oversight, particularly in markets where private provision has expanded rapidly. As international student mobility continues to evolve, policymakers and institutional leaders must address these challenges while leveraging the opportunities presented by PrHEIs. Future research should focus on the long-term impact of private higher education on global student mobility, employability outcomes, and the role of transnational partnerships in shaping the sector's sustainability. In an era of increasing globalisation, the continued development and regulation of private higher education will be pivotal in ensuring accessibility, academic quality, and the overall contribution of PrHEIs to the global knowledge economy.

# International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview

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Shahid Hafeez is a distinguished figure in the educational consultancy field, serving as the Chairman of ASFE Consultants UK since 2010. With over a decade of dedicated experience, Shahid has been instrumental in shaping the educational trajectories of countless students, providing expert guidance and strategic insights to navigate the complexities of higher education.

Under his leadership, ASFE Consultants UK has emerged as a trusted name in the educational consultancy sector. The firm specialises in offering comprehensive consulting services to students aspiring to pursue higher education domestically and internationally. Shahid's profound understanding of the educational landscape and his commitment to excellence have driven ASFE Consultants to achieve remarkable success and recognition.

Shahid's expertise spans various educational services, including university admissions, career counselling, and academic planning. His personalised approach and unwavering dedication to his clients' success have earned him a stellar reputation among students, parents, and educational institutions alike.

A visionary leader, Shahid continuously strives to innovate and expand the services offered by ASFE Consultants UK, ensuring that students receive the highest quality of support and guidance. His passion for education and relentless pursuit of excellence makes him a respected and influential figure in educational consultancy.



# International Students and Private Higher Education: A Five-Country Overview

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