

# | Insights for New Zealand's English Language Schools & PTEs

to better attract Chinese students

July – September 2024

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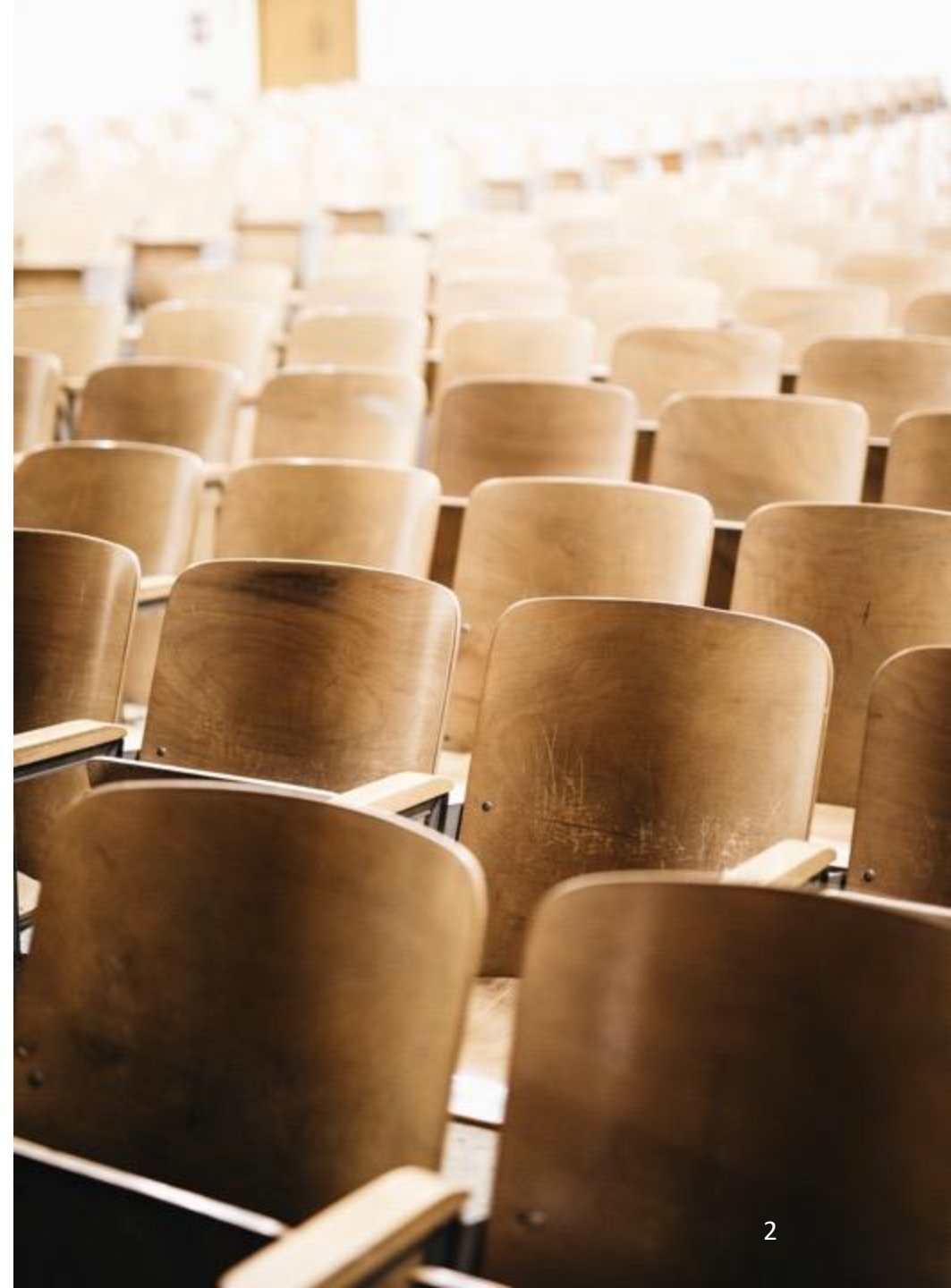
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# Introduction & Objectives

- **New Zealand's vocational and language schools** have long been recognized for offering quality education, practical skills, and strong pathways to employment. However, despite these strengths, the market presence of New Zealand's Private Training Establishments (PTEs) and language schools remains relatively limited in China. This project aims to deepen the understanding of how New Zealand PTEs and English language schools can strengthen their positioning and better appeal to Chinese target students.
- **The core objective of this research** is to uncover key insights into the needs and decision-making processes of students and parents when choosing PTEs or language schools. By identifying these key factors, New Zealand's educational institutions can enhance their marketing strategies and refine their positioning to better align with the expectations and preferences of Chinese students. The research will provide practical recommendations that focus on increasing New Zealand's visibility and appeal in China's highly competitive education market.
- **China Skinny has been responsible** for conducting a comprehensive analysis through a combination of eight qualitative interviews with agents and a quantitative survey with nearly 700 students and parents in eight cities (see appendix on p38 for more details). These insights can also be explored through [a Power BI dashboard](#), enabling detailed analysis of city-level differences and study types, and offering an interactive view of preferences across regions and education categories

This research involves understanding the perceptions of New Zealand's education system, identifying the key factors influencing decisions, and evaluating the communication channels that resonate most with the target audience. Our role has been to deliver actionable insights and practical steps that can guide New Zealand's PTEs and language schools in meeting the needs of their prospective students more effectively. Many insights may be similar to other research done, but note that this is the first research targeting language schools and PTEs, so should help guide decisions for these institutions.

Note that perceptions may be skewed towards NZ as survey respondents all had NZ in the top-5 countries they are considering, being the most appropriate target market. All experts currently work with NZ institutions, again the most appropriate group to focus on due to their current awareness and relationship with NZ.





# Executive Summary

INSIGHTS	PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>Increase Marketing Visibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure official websites are up to date and optimized for needs, and your presence on destination sites is solid</li> <li>• Prioritize content on WeChat official accounts for reliable communication with students and parents</li> <li>• Utilize the social media platforms like Xiaohongshu/RED to reach younger audiences with visually appealing content</li> <li>• Share engaging videos, behind-the-scenes content, and <b>student testimonials</b> on platforms</li> </ul>
<b>Generate Student Testimonials &amp; User-Generated Content (UGC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch campaigns to encourage <b>student and alumni-generated content</b>, such as blogs, videos, and testimonials</li> <li>• Highlight real experiences, from daily student life to internships and career pathways</li> <li>• Incentivize UGC by offering small rewards or recognition for contributors</li> </ul>
<b>Career Support &amp; Employability Concerns</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showcase New Zealand's <b>career support services, internship opportunities, and job placement success</b> through events</li> <li>• Collaborate with <b>industry partners</b> to provide <b>more job placements and internships</b> related to students' fields of study</li> <li>• Provide <b>clear information on Green List careers</b> to ensure students understand how their chosen courses align with job opportunities and immigration pathways in New Zealand, especially those on the Green List</li> </ul>
<b>Offline Engagement through Open Days &amp; Events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase <b>Open Days, workshops, and face-to-face events</b> in partnership with agents and local institutions</li> <li>• Provide <b>career guidance</b> and promote internship opportunities at these events</li> <li>• Highlight real-world success stories and create <b>alumni connections</b> at events</li> </ul>
<b>Clear Communication &amp; Visa Guidelines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The visa process needs to be <b>simplified and clarified</b>, making them more student-friendly</li> <li>• Provide agents with <b>updated and clear training on visa procedures and guidance on proof of funds requirements</b></li> <li>• Create <b>step-by-step visa guides</b> for students, outlining document requirements, timelines, and financial info</li> </ul>
<b>Highlighting Safety &amp; Affordability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize <b>New Zealand's safe environment</b> as a key selling point in all marketing materials and events</li> <li>• Promote <b>affordable education options and career support</b> available in New Zealand to draw in cost-conscious students</li> </ul>
<b>Engagement with Chinese Agents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure <b>regular visits and events with local agents</b> to maintain relationships and provide updates and training</li> <li>• Host or co-host in-person individual events with <b>agents</b> to expand reach</li> <li>• Provide agents with <b>real-time consulting (especially through WeChat)</b> and regular updates</li> </ul>

# Getting the Basics Right: Check List

## Communications Must-Haves:

### With Parents & Students

#### ☐ Localize website to key preferences:

- Ideally tailored to Chinese parents' and students' browsing habits including incorporating the information listed in the checklist below

#### ☐ WeChat Official Account holding key information and updates:

- Holds much of the key info outlined in the checklist below, QR present at every touch point for easy access

#### ☐ Digital brochures in Chinese:

- Clearly outline courses, tuition fees, entry requirements, and career outcomes, ideally with cost-of-living advice

#### ☐ Infographics of visa requirements:

- Simplify the visa process with visual guides, including the proof of funds, making it accessible for parents and students

#### ☐ Work & internship pathways:

- Highlight career prospects, offering options for internships or post-study work opportunities, and the alignment with Green List occupations

#### ☐ Showcase real-life experiences of students:

- Ideally video, but also images and text of students' everyday life studying, extracurricular activities, successful experiences and the support they received.

### With Agents

#### ☐ Easy-to-navigate website:

- Ensure ease of access for users to quickly find relevant information without having to navigate different sections

#### ☐ WeChat (Groups) and consulting with agents, and potentially parents and students:

- Provide real-time WeChat support for consultations and updates

#### ☐ Regularly visit local agents:

- Conduct regular in-person visits to agents in China for relationship maintenance and updates on admissions.

#### ☐ Up-to-date interactive training sessions:

- Provide continuous training sessions for agents to ensure they are up to date with new admissions criteria, program offerings, and visa processes

#### ☐ Collaborate on offline events:

- Partner closely with agents for in-person events to directly engage with institutions and representatives for better understanding and promotion

#### ☐ Content allowing agents to showcase real-life student experiences:

- Provide agents with real-life student experiences to present during consultations with potential students and parents

# Getting the Basics Right: Check List

## Orientation & Support Must-Haves:

### ☐ Cost of Living Advice:

- Provide clear budgeting guidelines and ways to manage living costs in New Zealand

### ☐ Acclimatization Support:

- Offer guidance on adapting to New Zealand's lifestyle, focusing on cultural and personal growth opportunities

### ☐ Offline events:

- Provide students and parents with firsthand experience of New Zealand institutions through immersive in-person events such as institution's open day

### ☐ Community Support:

- Emphasize the safety and support net provided by the institution and supporting community in New Zealand.

## Nice-to-Have (Communications & Orientation/Support):

### ☐ Short targeted videos/blogs/testimonials from alumni:

- Share real student stories and behind-the-scenes content to build trust
- Showcase successful alumni and their journey from education to employment

### ☐ Xiaohongshu and other social accounts:

- Visually appealing, lifestyle content to woo youth, encourage and share UGC (User Generated Content)
- Ensure frequent updates with living and studying tips to keep students engaged

### ☐ Added services with X-factor which encourages UGC/Advocacy:

- Holistic thoughtful service will likely be rewarded by student endorsements
- Encourage international students to post on social platforms about their studies and life by organizing events
- Programs such as camping trips and pet care programs, are not expected and often unique, and will encourage UGC (User Generated Content) and advocacy.



## SECTION 1

# Building Awareness

Trusted offline resources, official platforms, and direct communication channels play a key role in shaping the study abroad decisions.

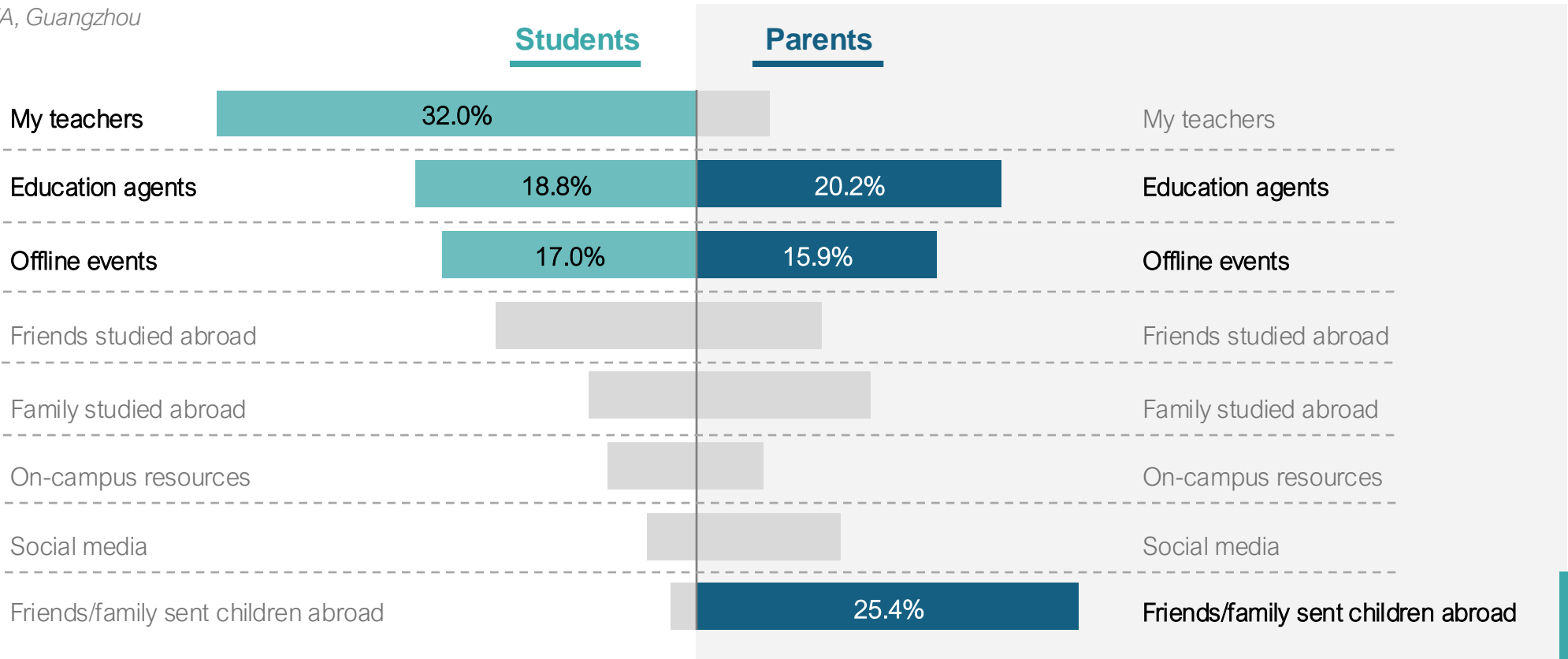
# Initial Awareness

Trusted offline resources are critical in study abroad decisions, with educators playing a key role for students and personal networks driving parental choices.

“ Our B2B partners could be agents, international schools, or even teachers within schools. They rely on us for all the institution-related information and to answer any questions parents or students may have.  
– Glacier, GEA, Guangzhou

Offline resources are preferred by both groups  
Initial awareness channels for Students and Parents

**Agent-Teacher Collaborations:**  
To reach and influence teachers, institutions can use B2B education agents. These agents act as intermediaries between smaller agents, international schools and school teachers. Although they don't always have direct contact with parents and students, they provide information and help answer questions from those who do.





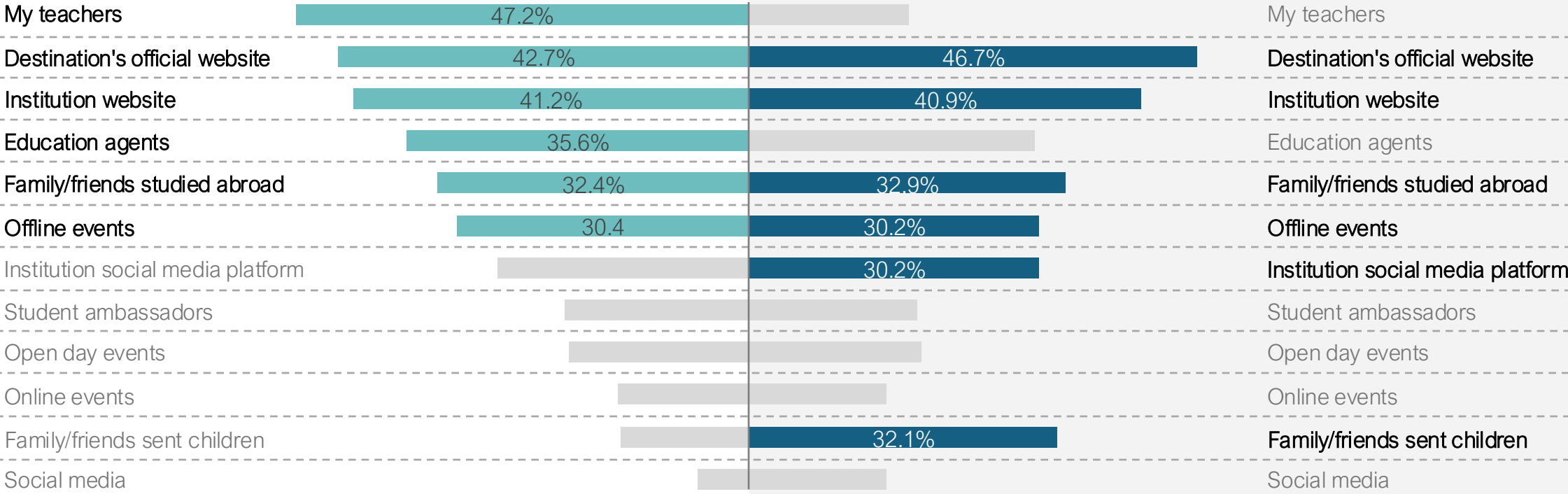
# Further Seeking

Students and parents prioritize official and personal networks when seeking additional information, underlining the value of credible sources.

Further information - reliance on trusted sources  
Channels for further discoveries

Students

Parents



# Experts Insight: Communication Channels – Parents & Students

Parents and students rely on diverse communication channels—social media, official websites, and direct contact—to gather study abroad information; though credibility and ease of access vary significantly.

Word of Mouth as a Trusted Source	Parents and students often rely on recommendations from friends, family, or peers who have firsthand experience with studying abroad.	<p>“Many students and parents come to us after hearing from friends or family members who have had a positive experience. They trust this personal advice more than what they might read online.</p> <p>- Michelle, EIC, Guangzhou</p>
Skepticism Toward Social Media Content	Social media’s influence is strong, but students and parents remain cautious, often questioning the reliability of content, especially from non-official accounts.	<p>“The influence of platforms like Xiaohongshu is strong, but students and parents are skeptical of the reliability of the content, especially from non-official accounts.</p> <p>- Sky, Can-Achieve, Beijing</p>
Reliance on Official Platforms for Accuracy	Despite the convenience of social media, official platforms are trusted for reliable and detailed information, even though they can be less user-friendly sometimes.	<p>“Despite the convenience of social media, students still rely on official institution websites for reliable information, even though these sites can sometimes be less user-friendly.</p> <p>- Deng, JJJ, Chongqing</p> <p>“If they want detailed and reliable information, in the end, everyone still goes to the institution's official website or official WeChat account, even though these platforms can sometimes be difficult to navigate.</p> <p>- Sherry, Hti, Shanghai</p>

# Experts Insight: Communication Channels - Agents

Agents face significant challenges in accessing and utilizing communication channels with New Zealand institutions, primarily due to a lack of timely updates, minimal in-country representation, and inadequate promotional activities.

Preference for Direct Communication	Agents prefer direct communication through WeChat or personal contacts due to faster and more specific responses.	<p>"When we have specific questions or need quick answers, WeChat or direct contact is always faster and more reliable.</p> <p>- Sherry, Hti, Shanghai</p>
Challenges with Official Websites	Agents find New Zealand's official websites more challenging to navigate compared to other countries like Australia.	<p>"And the individual institutions website. I know what information can be found on the official websites, but the feedback I got from the agency team was that the official websites of New Zealand institutions are more difficult to use than those of Australia. It's hard to find some course information, tuition fees, etc.</p> <p>- Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing</p>
Limited In-Country Representation	There is a lack of consistent in-country representation from New Zealand institutions, which leads to a reliance on occasional workshops and events. Although no substitute for face-to-face, WeChat Groups can help (see p.31)	<p>"I'm not sure if institutions in New Zealand only have one representative for everything at a institution. From what we've seen, most institutions and polytechnics only have one... If we don't see the institution's representative for a long time, we might forget about the institution. Ultimately, when we make recommendations, we tend to recommend the ones we know well or can easily find the representatives to consult when needed... Otherwise, we don't feel comfortable recommending it, if we're not familiar with the institution or if we're not sure about the program. In that case, we might choose not to say.</p> <p>- Glacier, GEA, Guangzhou</p>
Infrequent and Insufficient Promotional Activities	New Zealand's promotional activities are seen as infrequent and less effective compared to Australia.	<p>"There aren't many activities like national tours done by individual institutions. There's not much publicity and not many activities [from institutions]. Whether we're talking about the number of events the institutions market themselves or the number they organize with agents, they're much less than in Australia.</p> <p>- Glacier, GEA, Guangzhou</p>

# Experts Insight: Communication Tools

Balancing trust and engagement: how agents and parents and students utilize and prefer communication tools for informed decision-making

## Current Tools

### Official Websites:

- **Agents:** Use official school websites and government portals for reliable, up-to-date information.  
*"We rely on official sources like institution websites to verify information before presenting it to clients. - Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing"*
- **Parents & Students:** Cross-check information on official institution websites for accuracy.  
*"While they may start with social media, parents and students always cross-check with official websites or WeChat account for accuracy. - Michelle, EIC, Guangzhou"*

### Direct Communication:

- **Agents:** Prefer direct contact with institutions for immediate updates. WeChat is powerful for this, see p.31.  
*"If there's no one to ask, we use the website as a reference. But the best way is to directly find someone to ask. - Sherry, Hti, Shanghai"*

### Social Media:

- **Parents & Students:** Often use platforms like WeChat and Xiaohongshu for initial research but verify information elsewhere.  
*"Many students and parents start with Xiaohongshu, but they usually verify the accuracy, especially by contacting agents or checking official websites. - Michelle, EIC, Guangzhou"*

## Preferred Tools and Materials

### Digital Brochures

- **Agents:** Prefer detailed brochures that clearly outline course details and entry requirements.  
*"Digital brochures are useful, particularly when they highlight course details and entry requirements. - Sherry, Hti, Shanghai"*
- **Parents & Students:** Favour concise brochures, especially in Chinese, that include course and career outcomes.  
*"Parents and students appreciate concise digital brochures, especially those available in Chinese. - Maggie, Chensheng, Tianjin"*

### Visual Tools (Infographics & Short Videos)

- **Agents:** Prefer targeted infographics and videos to quickly communicate key information to clients.  
*"Infographics and short, targeted videos are preferred by agents for quick and clear reference. - Glacier, GEA, Guangzhou"*
- **Parents & Students:** Drawn to interactive videos that showcase student success and career paths.  
*"Students and parents are drawn to interactive videos that showcase job prospects and successful alumni. - Maggie, Chensheng, Tianjin"*





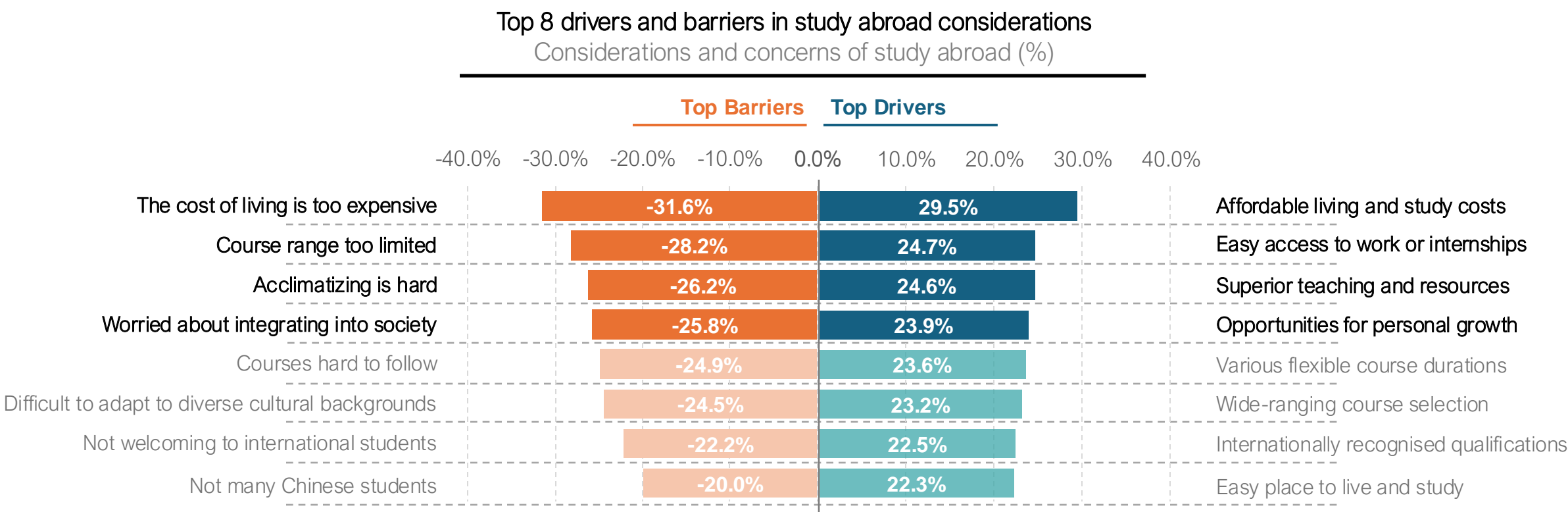
## SECTION 2

# Destination Considerations

Affordability, safety, and quality of education are key drivers for choosing study destinations, while geopolitical stability and high living costs are critical barriers influencing both students and parents in their decision-making

# Drives & Barriers

Cost is a decisive factor in studying abroad, with affordability driving interest, yet high living expenses are the greatest obstacle



Expert Insight

“Many students reconsider their options when they realize the high cost of living in certain countries. It’s often the biggest deterrent.”  
- Deng, JjL, Chongqing

“The fear of not fitting into a new culture or society is a significant concern for many, especially in countries with fewer international communities.”  
- Glacier, GEA, Guangzhou

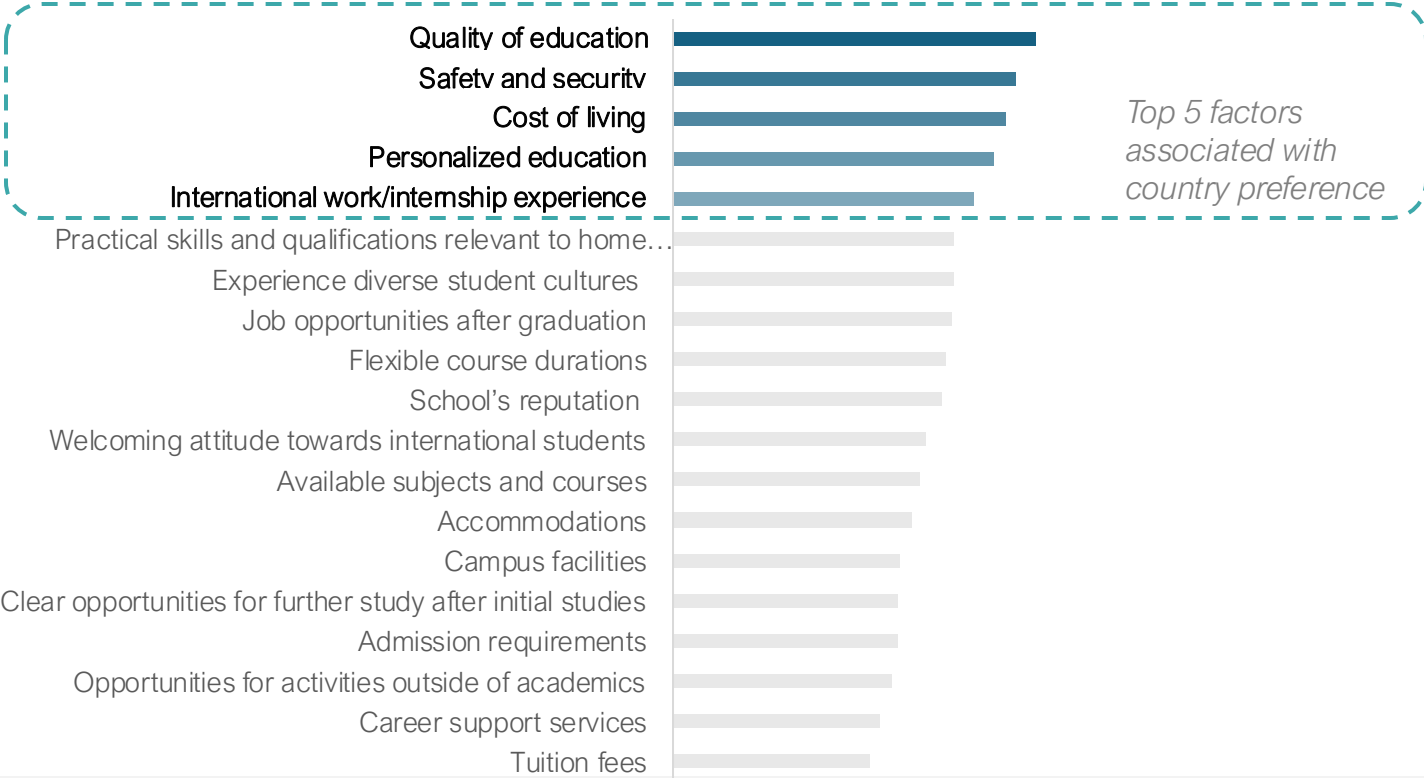
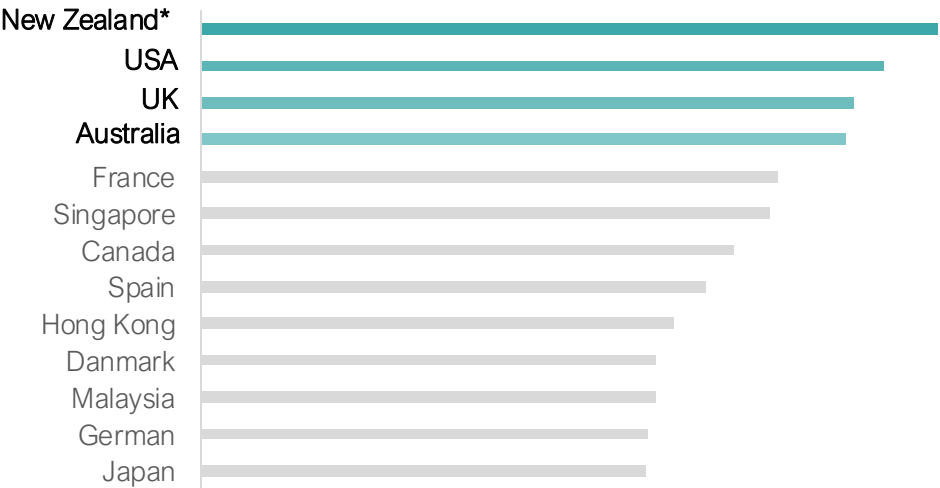
“The lower cost of living in countries like New Zealand compared to others is a strong attraction for students looking to manage their expenses.”  
- Sky, Can-Achieve, Beijing

“The availability of internships and work opportunities during studies is a major factor, as students want to gain practical experience alongside their education.”  
- Michelle, EIC, Guangzhou

# Top 5 Factors for the Destination Considerations

New Zealand, the USA, the UK, and Australia are comparable destinations with similar sentiment for the most critical factors influencing their decision-making

Top 5 factors associated with country preference  
Comparison of leading study destinations



Expert Insight

“Students choose destinations that offer **degrees recognized globally, ensuring better job opportunities.**”  
- Sherry, Hti, Shanghai

“Parents **feel reassured** when choosing safer destinations like New Zealand, where safety is a strong selling point.”  
- Glacier, GEA, Guangzhou

“New Zealand’s [perceived] **lower cost of living** compared to Australia is a significant factor for many students.”  
- Deng, JjL, Chongqing

“Parents are drawn to destinations that **offer a good balance of cost and educational quality**, like Malaysia or Singapore.”  
- Sky, Can-Achieve, Beijing

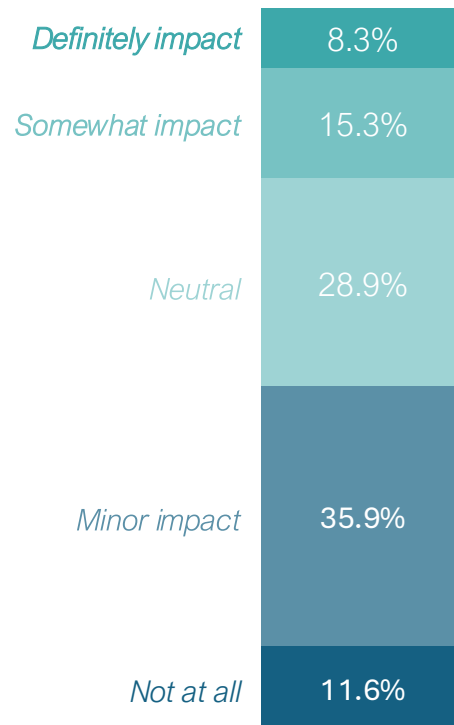
\*Note: Survey results may be skewed towards New Zealand due to the requirement for participants to select it to participate, however these people are your lowest-hanging fruit. NZ was rated highly by students, parents and agents in our research because local job and immigration opportunities are important when choosing PTEs and language schools and NZ is among the best for these, and school rankings are less important.

# Influence of Global Events

Geopolitical and economic stability, along with health concerns, dominate destination selection criteria

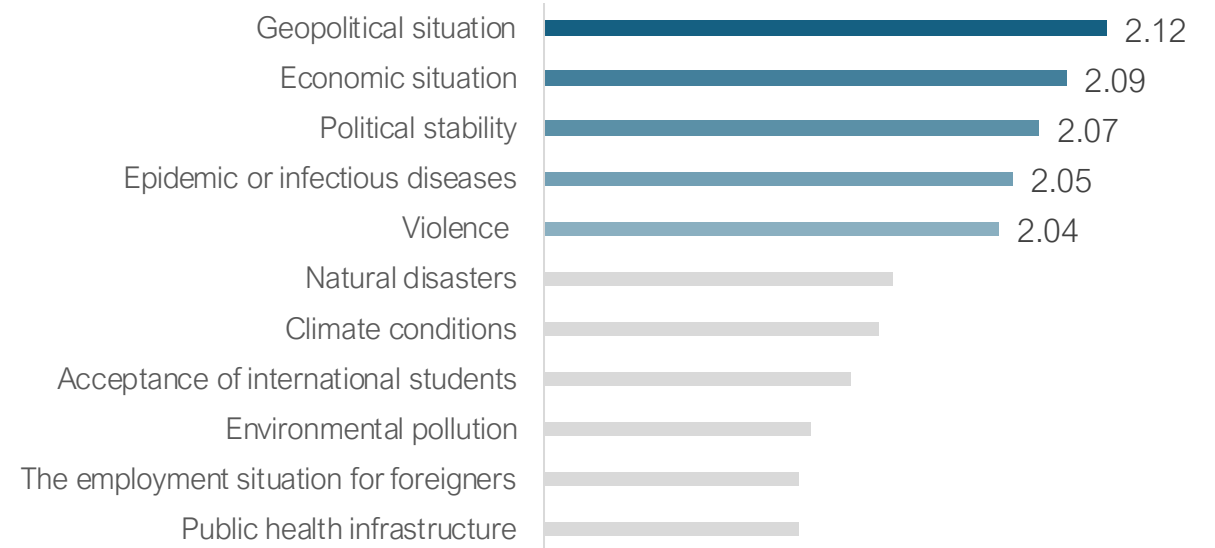
## The moderate impact on global events

Level of influence of global events on decision-making



## Stability and health are critical in choosing a destination

Top global events influencing destination decisions



“ One important reason for choosing Hong Kong is its proximity to China. Some clients even told us, ‘Even if something happens, I can crawl back to mainland China, but I can’t do that in other places.’ With the world now at war, like the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, safety becomes a primary concern.

- Michelle, EIC, Guangzhou



The background of the slide is a photograph of a large crowd of people, likely at a concert or festival, with many hands raised in the air. The image is dark and somewhat blurred, with a warm, golden-brown color palette. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text for the slide.

## SECTION 3

# Perception of PTEs & Language Schools in New Zealand

New Zealand's PTEs and language schools offer practical career training and flexible learning, but integration and cultural adaptation remain key concerns for international students.

# Experts Insight: Key Features of New Zealand's Appeal

New Zealand offers a unique blend of safety, affordability, and educational quality, making it a prime destination for students.

Safety and Security	New Zealand is regarded as one of the safest study destinations globally, providing a secure environment that ensures peace of mind for students and their families.	<p>"Compared to other countries, New Zealand is considered much safer, particularly in cities like Auckland and Wellington, which really reassures parents when sending their children abroad.</p> <p>- Maggie, Chensheng, Tianjin</p>
Affordable Living and Education Costs	New Zealand stands out for its relatively low living expenses on a global scale compared to other popular destinations like Australia or UK.	<p>"The financial burden is less here than in Australia or the US, which is a huge plus for families considering study abroad.</p> <p>- Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing</p>
Immigration Opportunities	New Zealand offers favourable immigration policies, particularly for students who wish to stay and work after their studies. This is an attractive feature for those considering long-term residency.	<p>"New Zealand's immigration policies are very favourable, particularly for students who want to stay and work after their studies.</p> <p>- Michelle, EIC, Guangzhou</p> <p>"New Zealand's post-study work visa allows graduates to stay and gain work experience, which is a significant advantage for those looking to settle long-term.</p> <p>- Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing</p>
Family-Friendly Policies	New Zealand's policies allow students to bring their families, with spouses able to work and children receiving free education, which is a major draw for many.	<p>"For families looking to relocate for education, New Zealand's inclusive policies provide significant support and ease.</p> <p>- Sky, Can-Achieve, Beijing</p> <p>"New Zealand's policy of allowing spouses to work and children to attend public institutions for free is particularly attractive for families.</p> <p>- Glacier, GEA, Guangzhou</p>
Reputation of Educational Institutions	New Zealand's educational institutions are globally recognized, particularly for their focus on research and practical learning.	<p>"New Zealand is recognized for its quality education system, which is globally respected.</p> <p>- Peter, Huaying, Chengdu</p>

# Experts Insight: Positive Perception of New Zealand as a Study Destination

New Zealand is widely perceived as a peaceful, welcoming, and pristine environment, ideal for both academic and personal growth

Safe and Secure Environment	New Zealand is perceived as a haven of safety, providing a secure backdrop for both learning and living.	<p>"Safety is a top priority for families, and New Zealand consistently ranks as one of the safest places to live and study.</p> <p>- Michelle, EIC, Guangzhou</p>
Respected Education System	New Zealand's education system is perceived as one of high standards, with strong global recognition, particularly in fostering critical thinking and innovation.	<p>"New Zealand's education quality is on par with top international standards, making it a preferred choice for students.</p> <p>- Peter, Huaying, Chengdu</p>
Welcoming and Supportive Society	The country's society is widely viewed as inclusive and nurturing, making it easier for international students to integrate and thrive.	<p>"The inclusivity in New Zealand is remarkable; students from diverse backgrounds feel welcomed and valued here.</p> <p>- Sky, Can-Achieve, Beijing</p>
Balanced Cost of Living	New Zealand is perceived as offering a good balance between quality and affordability, making it an attractive option for students worldwide.	<p>"New Zealand offers a balance of affordable living costs and high-quality education, which is a strong attraction for international students.</p> <p>- Deng, JIL, Chongqing</p>
Quality of Life and Environment	New Zealand offers a tranquil, high-quality lifestyle, attracting students who prioritize a balanced and serene environment.	<p>"Living in New Zealand offers a unique blend of tranquility and a supportive community, which greatly enhances the student experience.</p> <p>- Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing</p>
Flexibility to take a different career path	Students aren't always aware that the system in NZ is much easier to put them on a different path or career change than it is in China, if they can afford it	<p>"Many students starting university in China may find after a year that it isn't for them, but it is difficult to change path in China. Similarly for those in their 30s looking for a career path it is hard to go to a Chinese institution.</p> <p>- Education livestreamer</p>



# Experts Insight: Challenges and Barriers to Studying in New Zealand

## Challenges that can deter prospective students

Higher Cost of Living in Major Cities	While New Zealand is cost-effective overall, living in the major cities like Auckland can be expensive, especially for students who choose PTEs due to limited budget.	<p>“Those who choose PTEs have often worked a number of years and are seeking seeking an easier learning environment, have limited budget, or don’t meet the admission requirements for a university master’s degree.” - Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing</p> <p>“Living in Auckland is quite expensive, especially for international students with limited budgets.” - Sky, Can-Achieve, Beijing</p>
Limited Work Opportunities	Students are concerned about limited work opportunities, especially outside of major cities or for those in vocational or language programs.	<p>“Finding part-time work as a language student is difficult, and without work, students face higher financial pressure.” - Michelle, EIC, Guangzhou</p>
Visa Process	New Zealand's visa process is perceived as more complicated compared to countries like Australia, creating frustration and delays for applicants.	<p>“The visa process is quite complicated, and students sometimes face delays that make planning difficult.” - Glacier, GEA, Guangzhou</p>
Proof of Funds Concerns in Non-Tier-1 Cities	Agents from Chengdu, Chongqing, and Tianjin mentioned students from those non-tier-1 cities may face difficulties securing proof of funds within a limited timeframe for visa applications.	<p>“it takes time and effort to prepare the proof of funds, especially in regions like Chongqing where many families may not have immediate access to large savings.” - Deng, JIL, Chongqing</p>
Less Competitive University Rankings	New Zealand's universities rank relatively lower globally, which negatively impacts the overall perception of the country's education system.	<p>“New Zealand's universities don't rank as high globally. This leads to doubts about the overall quality of their education system.” - Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing</p>
Limited Alignment with Green List Opportunities	There's a need to know the courses that align more closely with New Zealand's Green List, particularly in fields related to high-demand skills that improve immigration and employment prospects.	<p>“Students want to know if the courses they choose can lead to better job and immigration opportunities in New Zealand, but we often don't have clear information on Green List career paths.” - Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing</p>
Lack of Regular Presence with Local Agents	The lack of consistent engagement with agents leads to outdated information and reduced promotion of institutions compared to other countries that maintain closer relationships with agents.	<p>“Many institutions don't have a regular presence here, so agents are left without updated information or support, which makes it harder to actively promote them to students.” - Sky, Can-Achieve, Beijing</p>

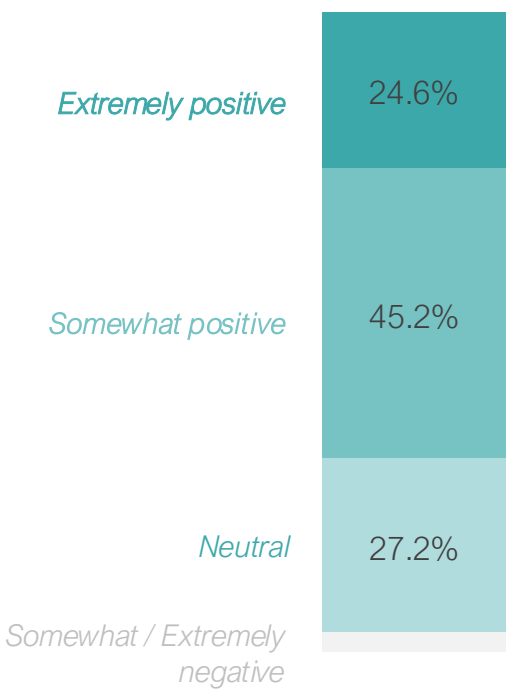


# Perception of PTEs & Language Schools in New Zealand

New Zealand’s PTEs and language schools are praised for their quality education, safe environment, and flexible course offering

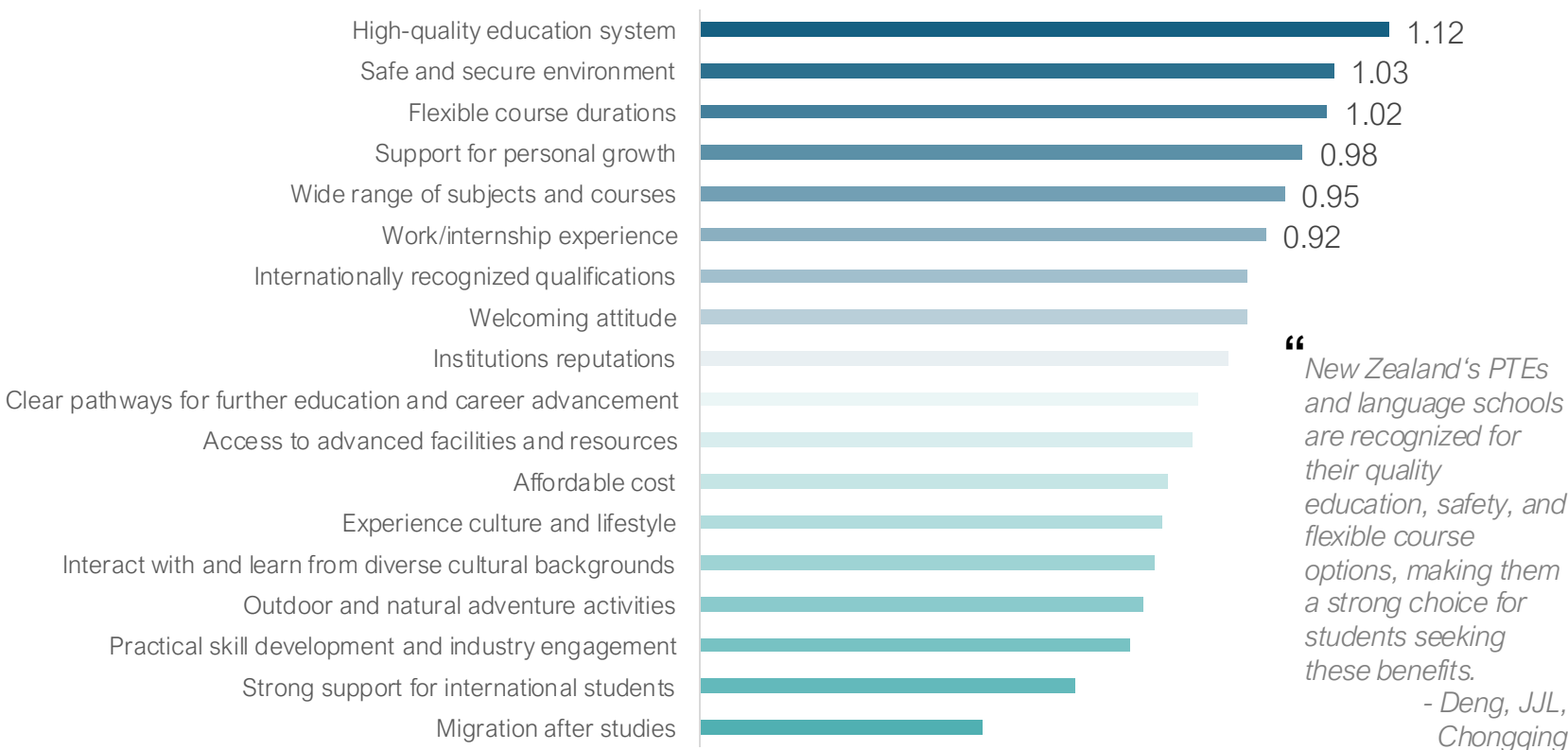
Strong positive views in New Zealand’s PTEs & language schools

Level of perception of institutions (%)



Education quality, safety, and course flexibility are highly regarded

Aspects defining PTEs & language schools



“New Zealand’s PTEs and language schools are recognized for their quality education, safety, and flexible course options, making them a strong choice for students seeking these benefits.”  
- Deng, JYL, Chongqing

# Experts Insight: Reasons to Choose Language Schools & PTEs

A destination of practical learning and immersive language experience

## Language Schools

Immersive Learning Environment	<p>“New Zealand's pure English environment, compared to domestic courses, provides a much stronger language boost.</p> <p>- Michelle, EIC, Guangzhou</p>
Pathways for Further Education	<p>“The language courses that are recognized across New Zealand provide a smooth transition to university studies.</p> <p>- Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing</p>
Flexibility and Accessibility	<p>“Short-term language programs are popular, especially for those who wish to experience overseas study before committing long-term.</p> <p>- Glacier, GEA, Guangzhou</p>
Cultural Immersion and Networking Opportunities	<p>“Students gain a deeper understanding of New Zealand culture and make international friends, which is a big plus.</p> <p>- Deng, JIL, Chongqing</p>
Support Services and Student Welfare	<p>“Language schools here offer strong support networks that help students adjust and thrive.</p> <p>- Sherry, Hti, Shanghai</p>

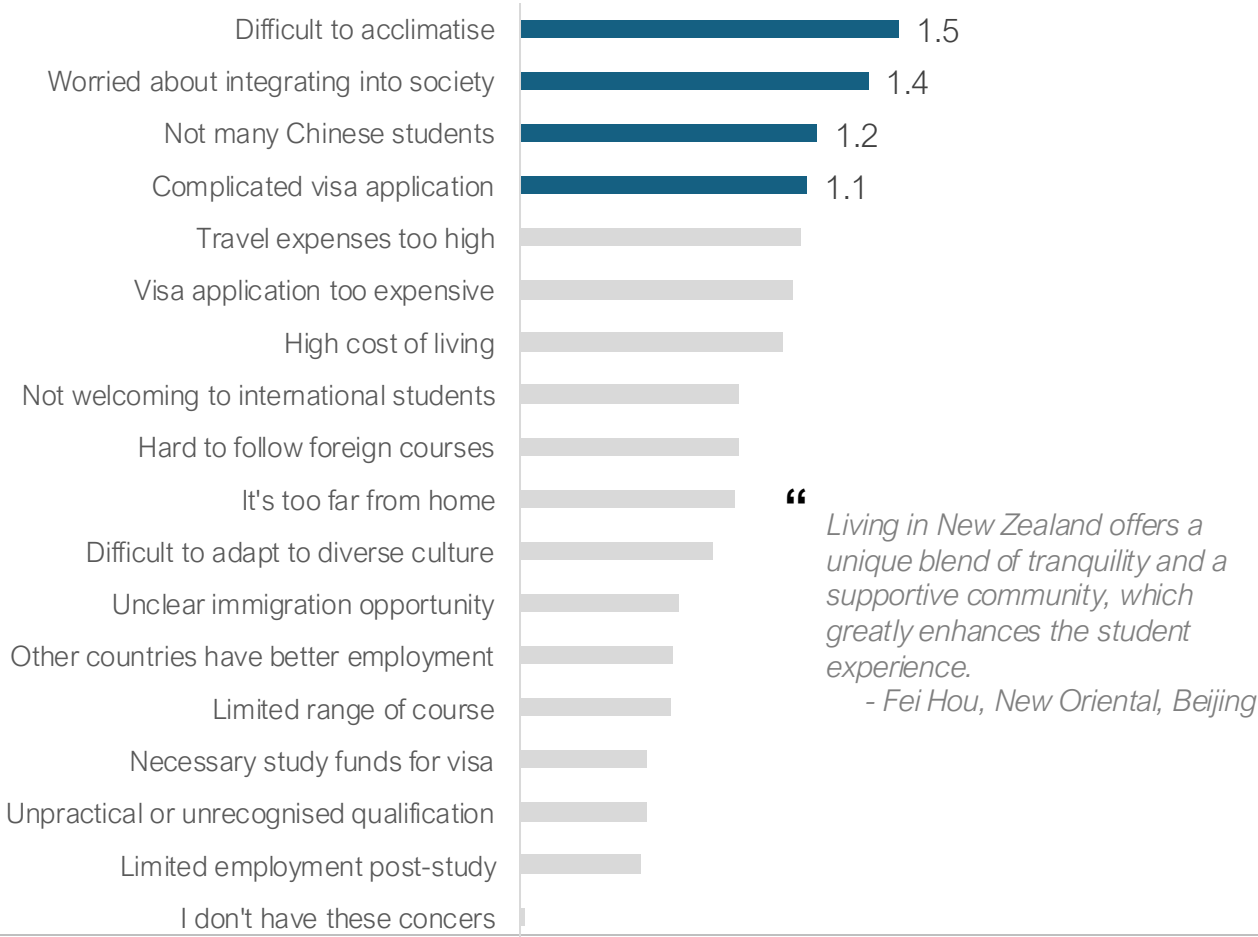
## PTEs

Career-Oriented and Practical Training	<p>“PTEs in New Zealand offer hands-on training that equips students with skills needed in the workforce.</p> <p>- Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing</p>
Alignment with Immigration Policies	<p>“For those aiming at immigration, vocational courses are aligned with the Green List, making them a clear path to residency.</p> <p>- Sky, Can-Achieve, Beijing</p>
Affordable and Accessible Education	<p>“The tuition fees at PTEs are significantly lower, making it a cost-effective choice for students.</p> <p>- Maggie, Chensheng, Tianjin</p>
Industry Connections and Employment	<p>“The practical focus and industry connections of these institutions really improve job prospects.</p> <p>- Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing</p>
Diverse Course Offerings	<p>“The range of vocational courses available here means there's something for every student's interest and career goals.</p> <p>- Maggie, Chensheng, Tianjin</p>
Favourable Residency Pathways	<p>“Residency pathways for vocational students are favourable to other countries, which makes the whole process less stressful.</p> <p>- Michelle, EIC, Guangzhou</p>

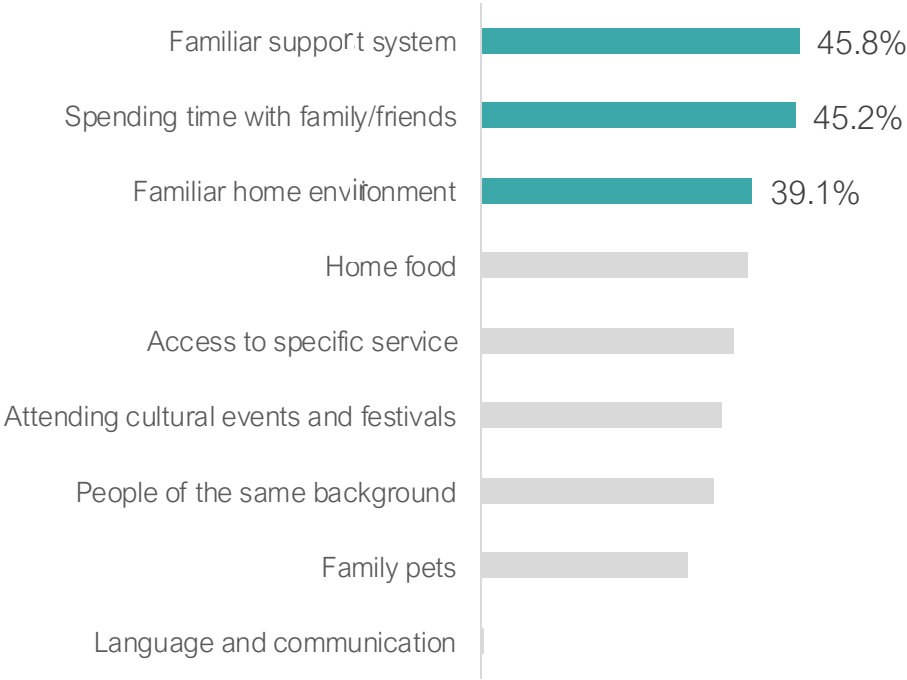
# Concerns of PTEs & Language Schools in New Zealand

While New Zealand offers significant opportunities, some challenges remain for international students

Key Concerns Regarding Cultural Integration  
Concerns About Studying in New Zealand



Drivers of Homesickness  
Key factors contributing to homesickness





## SECTION 4

# Understanding of Private & Public Institutions

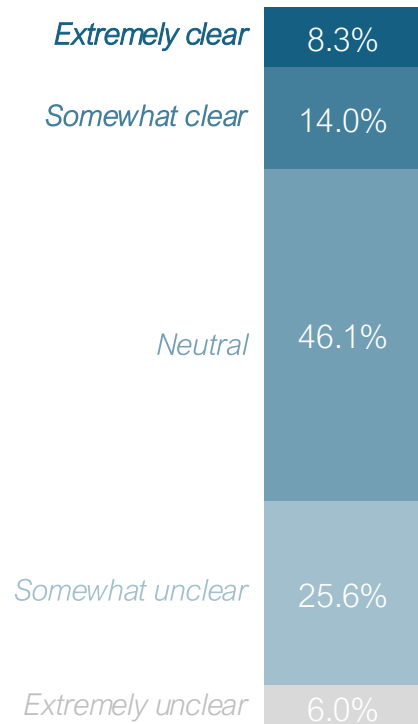
Public institutions are favoured for their broad curriculum and affordability, while private institutions attract students through personalized education and / or advanced facilities.



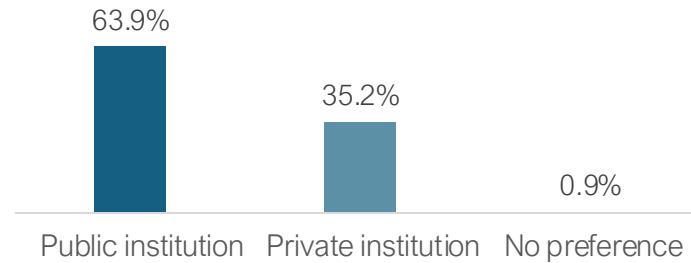
# Private VS. Public Institutions

A moderate understanding of the differences between public and private institutions suggests that the messaging and guidance from agents seem to significantly influence this preference.

Moderate understanding of public & private institution differences  
Level of understanding public & private institutions



Strong Preference for Public Institutions  
Preference of public & private institutions (%)



“Public institutions are generally more recognized and trusted, especially by parents who are concerned about the credibility and quality of education.”  
- Maggie, Chensheng, Tianjin

## Expert Insight

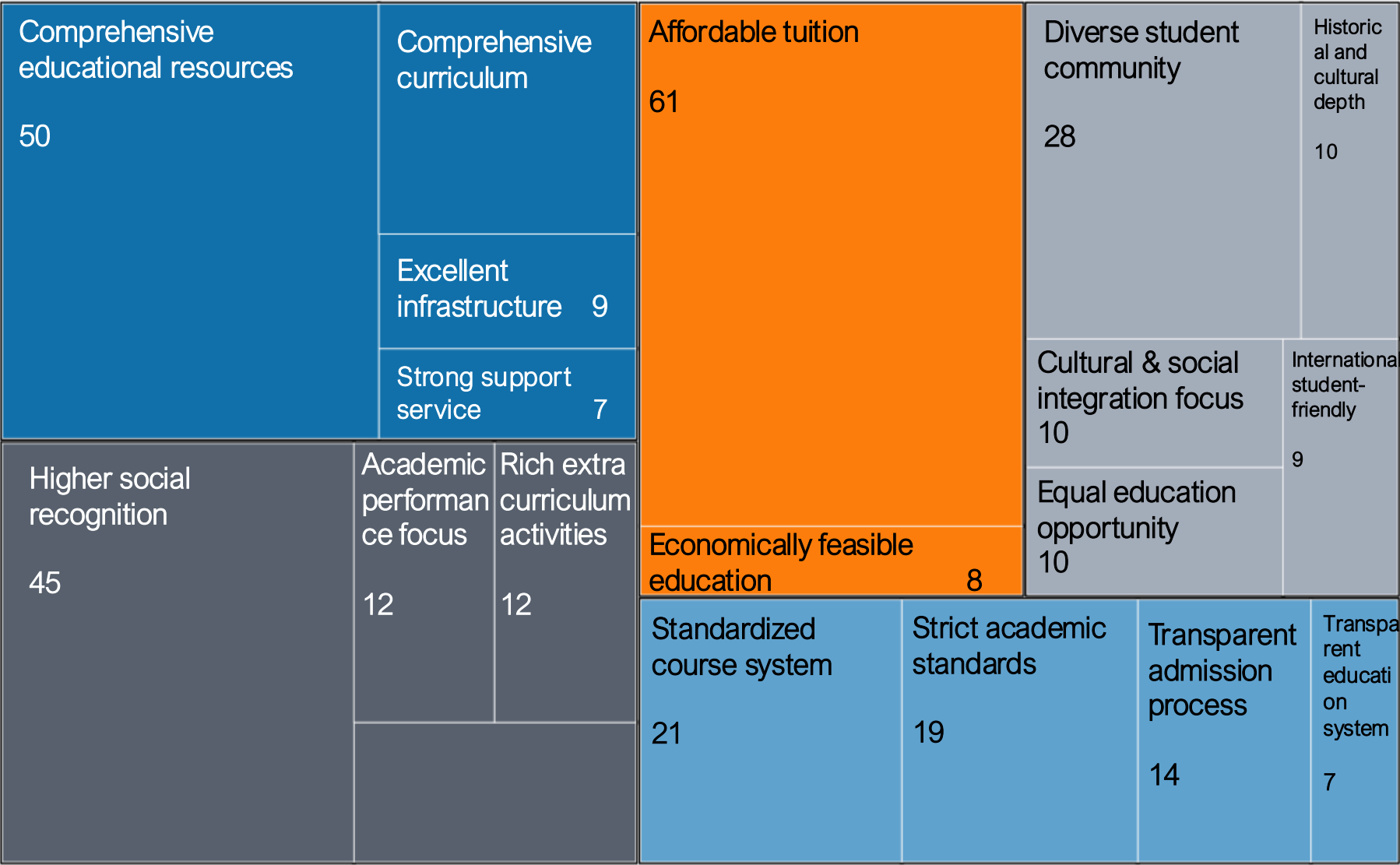
### Why Public Institutions:

When recommending institutions, agents tend to downplay the differences between private and public institutions, while often emphasizing public institutions:

- Higher recognition and trust
- Better value for money
- Government support and stability
- Broader curriculum and extracurricular opportunities
- Perceptions of easier visa application and admission process

# Public Institutions

Public institutions are favoured for their affordability and comprehensive educational resources, offering standardized curricula and broad social recognition



Comprehensive resources and affordability drive choice  
Perception of public institutions

“  
The perception is that public institutions in New Zealand are recognized globally for their high academic standards and comprehensive education system, making them a popular choice for families.  
- Maggie, Chensheng, Tianjin

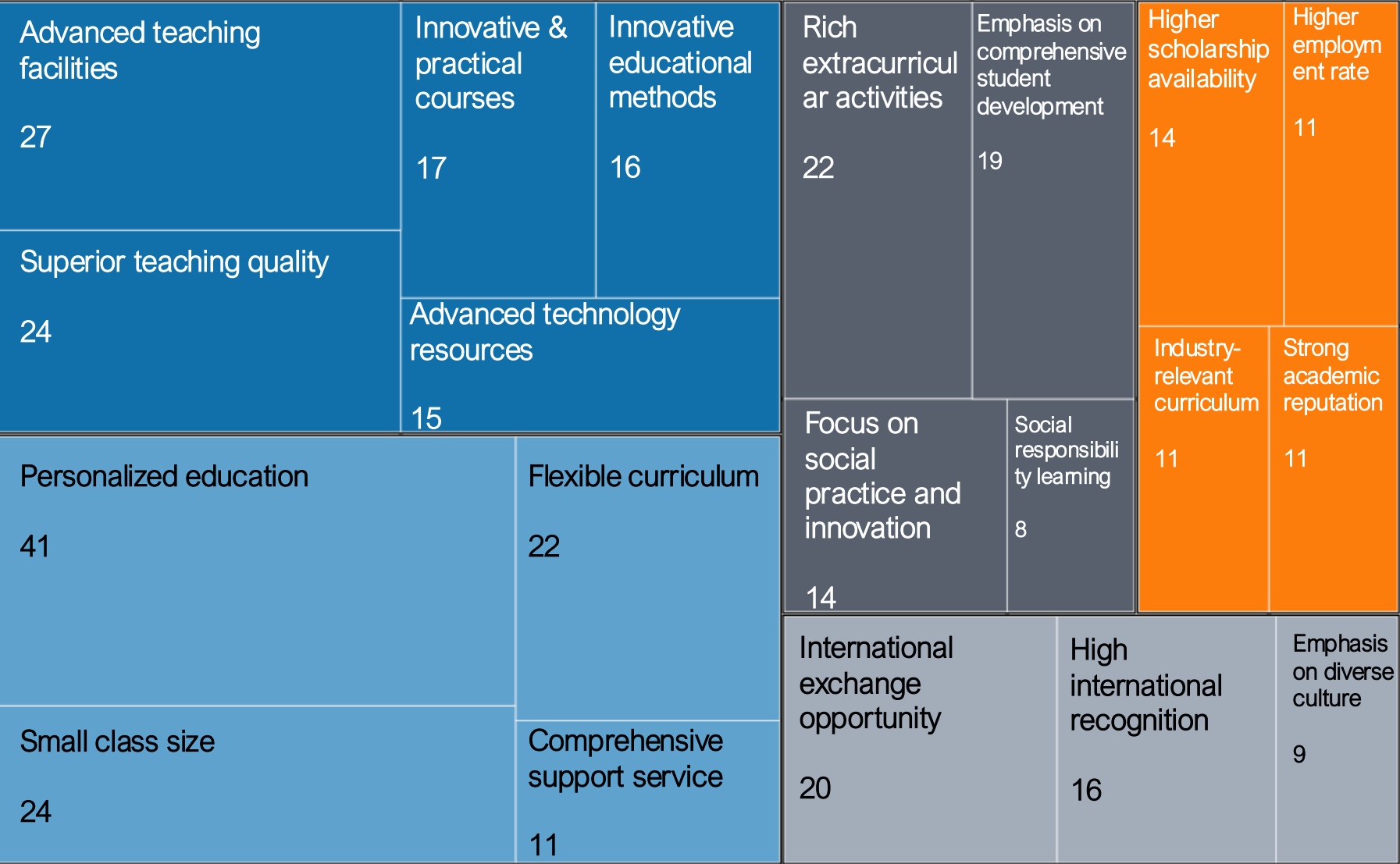
“  
There is a perception that government's support ensures that public institutions have top-notch facilities and resources, creating a conducive learning environment for all students.  
- Peter, Huaying, Chengdu

- Theme
- Comprehensive Education Resources
  - Economically Feasible Education
  - Inclusive and Diverse Environment
  - Social and Academic Recognition
  - Structured and Regulated Education

Note: color shows details about the theme. Size shows the sum of the frequency the main characteristics mentioned. The marks are labelled by theme, main characteristics, and frequency sum.

# Private Institutions

Private institutions should play to strengths attracting students with personalised education and / or advanced teaching facilities, emphasising a flexible curriculum and career-oriented focus



Personalized education and / or advanced facilities shape preferences  
Perception of private institutions

“ The smaller class sizes in private institutions mean that each student receives more personalized attention, which greatly enhances their learning experience. ”  
- Sherry, Hti, Shanghai

“ Private institutions in New Zealand are incredibly flexible with their admission processes and course start dates, which is a huge advantage for international students. ”  
- Michelle, EIC, Guangzhou

- Theme
- Advanced Learning Environment
  - Career-Oriented Focus
  - Global and Cultural Exposure
  - Hollistic Student Development
  - Personalized and Flexible Education

Note: color shows details about the theme. Size shows the sum of the frequency the main characteristics mentioned. The marks are labelled by theme, main characteristics, and frequency sum.



A low-angle shot of a graduation ceremony. In the foreground, several graduates in blue gowns with red and yellow cuffs are reaching their hands up towards the sky. Above them, numerous black graduation caps with red tassels are floating in the air. The background is a large, light-colored building with many windows.

## SECTION 5

# How Are Other Countries Doing?

To compete effectively with global education leaders, New Zealand must learn from competitors' strategies while leveraging its unique strengths

# Experts Insight: Global Competitors

## Lessons from global competitors in education

*"These countries have successfully enhanced their appeal by focusing on key areas such as visa policies, market visibility, and cultural integration."*

### Australia

- **Visa Policies:** Simplified visa processes with shorter proof of funds duration.

*"Australia's visa process is much more straightforward, with funds only needing to be in the account a week before applying."*

– Deng, JYL, Chongqing

- **Prominent Market Presence:** Aggressive marketing campaigns targeting international students.

*"Australian institutions are much more visible in China, with frequent events and strong social media presence."*

– Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing

### Asia (Singapore, Malaysia)

- **Cost-Effective Education:** Lower tuition and living costs with high-quality education.

*"Studying in Malaysia offers the same degree as Australia\* but at half the cost."*

– Deng, JYL, Chongqing

- **Proximity to Home:** Shorter travel distance for students from Asia.

*"Singapore's location is a major advantage, as it's close to home for many Asian students."*

– Glacier, GEA, Guangzhou

### UK & Europe

- **Established Institutions:** High global rankings and historical prestige.

*"UK institutions' rankings speak for themselves, and this prestige is a big draw for students."*

- **Cultural Exposure:** Proximity to multiple cultures and languages.

*"Studying in Europe offers exposure to a variety of cultures, which is a unique advantage."*

– Maggie, Chensheng, Tianjin

### North America (Canada being most comparable to NZ)

- **Immigration-Friendly Policies:** Clear pathways to residency post-study

*"Canada's clear immigration pathways are a significant draw for students planning to stay after graduation."*

– Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing

- **Quality of Life:** High standard of living and welcoming environment.

*"Canada is known for its high quality of life, which makes it a top choice for students seeking a safe and welcoming environment."*

– Peter, Huaying, Chengdu

*\*Note: Many Australian universities have branches in Southeast Asia, allowing students to earn the same Australian degree at a lower cost, which strengthens their market appeal in the region.*



# Experts Insight: Comprehensive Marketing Strategy

## – Online Presence

A complete picture to prospective students: strong marketing, a supportive environment, and clear career paths

*“New Zealand must modernise its online approach to engage digitally savvy students, focusing on key platforms and user-generated content.”*

### Social Media Campaigns

**Prioritise content on WeChat official accounts**, viewed as more reliable by students and parents, complements Xiaohongshu to reach younger audiences with visually appealing content.

**Focus:** Highlight New Zealand’s safe environment, affordable education tied to Green List occupations, and career support through engaging videos such as from WeChat Channels and behind-the-scenes content.

**Example:** Create a series featuring current Chinese students sharing their journey and experiences in different locations, from daily life to internships.

*“Australia’s institutions are much more visible in China, with frequent events and strong social media presence.*

*- Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing*

### Student Testimonials & User-Generated Content (UGC)

**Encourage current students and alumni** to share experiences through videos, blogs, and social media posts.

**Focus:** Testimonials should emphasize aspects like integration into the local culture, quality of education, and successful career outcomes.

**Example:** Host a competition for students to create a video about their experience in New Zealand, offering prizes for the most creative or inspiring entries.

*“Hearing directly from students who have studied abroad builds trust and helps others envision their own success.*

*- Michelle, EIC, Guangzhou*

### Digital Brochures

Create brochures with tailored content for parents and students, each **emphasising their unique concerns**

- For parents, focus on financial affordability, visa guides, career outcomes, and future salary level
- For students, emphasise student life, internship opportunities, and future career prospects.

**Example:** A section on how New Zealand’s educational system prepares students for global careers, cultural diversity, and daily life.

*“Custom content targeted for students and parents helps provide more relevant information for each audience.*

*- Peter, Huaying, Chengdu*

### Visa Information and Process Guides

**Provide simplified guides** that explain the visa process clearly and address key financial concerns:

- Clear instructions on financial documents, especially the proof of funds.
- How long the process typically takes.
- Step-by-step instructions for completing the application.

**Example:** A digital PDF and/or infographic that explains the entire visa process, making it easy for both students and parents to follow.

*“Clear visa information could make New Zealand more attractive to international students.*

*- Glacier, GEA, Guangzhou*

# Experts Insight: Comprehensive Marketing Strategy

## – Offline Engagement

A complete picture to prospective students: strong marketing, a supportive environment, and clear career paths

*“Offline events, while more costly, provide a direct way to build trust and personal connections with prospective students and their families...”*

### Open-Days & Face-to-Face Events

**Increase the number of open days, institution tours, and workshops.** Rather than trying to cover everywhere, focus on specific cities with a high propensity to study in NZ.

**Focus:** Demonstrate the advantages of studying in New Zealand, such as proof of funds preparation, internship opportunities, practical learning, and living in a welcoming community.

**Example:** Host virtual open days that include live campus tours, Q&A sessions with admissions officers, and interviews with current students.

### Career-Focused Events

**Highlight job placements, internship opportunities, and alignment with Green List opportunities** during events, addressing concerns about employability.

**Focus:** Emphasise sectors where New Zealand excels and the industries that actively recruit international students.

**Example:** Create panels featuring alumni who successfully transitioned from internships to full-time jobs in New Zealand companies.

### Tailored Physical Brochures

Provide hard-copy brochures at in-person events that are **specifically tailored for parents and students**.

**Focus:** The brochures should emphasise different aspects such as New Zealand’s safety, the student experience, and career opportunities aligned with the Green List

**Example:** Use infographics to make complex processes such as visa requirements more digestible

### Collaborations with Chinese Agents

**Ensure regular visits and events with agents** for updates and relationship-building to **expand reach**

**Focus:** Leverage the networks of local agents to reach a wider audience and offer exclusive events where agents can showcase New Zealand institutions to potential clients

**Example:** Host individual events in China and invite agents, providing them firsthand experience to effectively promote the institutions to parents and students

*“At a foreign university’s open day, parents and students were so eager to attend that many were willing to wait outside just to participate.*

*- Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing*

*“Students want assurance that their studies will lead to tangible job opportunities; clear pathways to employment are crucial.*

*- Fei Hou, New Oriental, Beijing*

*“Joint efforts with local institutions can significantly boost New Zealand’s visibility in the market.*

*- Sherry, Hti, Shanghai*



## SECTION 6

# Case Study: WeChat Official Account Set-Up



# WeChat: The Most Critical Platform for China

## Why WeChat Matters:

- With **1.36 billion monthly active users**, WeChat is China’s go-to platform for communication, search, and transactions.
- **WeChat Official Accounts** enable direct communication with users, making it an essential tool for building brand awareness, trust, and ongoing engagement.
- **Best Value for Limited Budgets:** WeChat provides versatile marketing, customer service, and payment solutions in a single platform. Many Chinese see it as a website. For institutions or brands with limited budgets, WeChat delivers maximum reach and interaction without the complexity of managing multiple platforms.

## WeChat Official Account Types:

SUBSCRIPTION ACCOUNT		SERVICE ACCOUNT	ENTERPRISE ACCOUNT/WECHAT
Ownership	Client’s mainland China entity	Client's overseas or mainland China entity	Client’s overseas or mainland China entity
Targeting	Media or entity to promote or deliver messages	Enterprise, government or organization, offer service to followers	Enterprise, government, public institution and other organization looks for colleagues’ collaborative operations
Group Messaging Frequency	1 post/day	4 posts/month	No limit
Display Interface	Folded in “Subscription-Account”	Folded in “Service Account”	In main WeChat conversation interface
Verify identity	Any users can scan the code and follow	Any users can scan the code and follow	Only users from the contact list by invitation
Post privacy	Any users can share and repost	Any users can share and repost	Can be shared and reposted, also support privacy function which not allowed any share and repost
Advance API	Limited	Yes	Yes
WeChat Pay	Government and media Only	Yes	Yes

## WeChat Groups:

WeChat Groups are **another common channel** in the WeChat marketing ecosystem, similar to a WhatsApp Group. Messages such as **text, voice, articles, videos, links and even mini programs** can be received within a WeChat group. Institutions would typically have different Groups set up for **agents, parents and student cohorts**. Groups are **two-way** meaning a member may ask a question and you or others can respond to it for the benefit of everyone in the group. Be careful to **manage the Group** to ensure it stays aligned with your values, and be responsive and conscious of spamming members as groups are often muted if they don’t provide value. A Chinese speaker or AI translation is recommended. Groups can be set up from personal WeChat accounts.



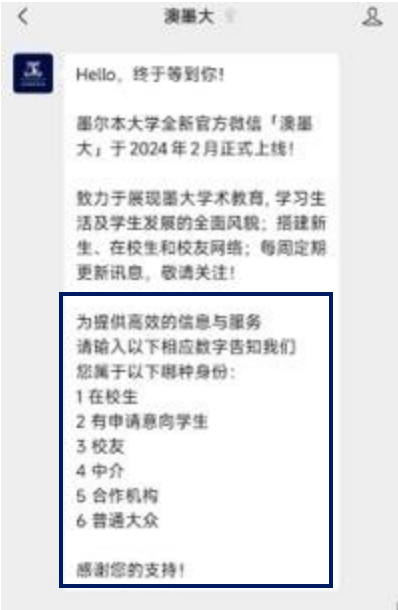
# WeChat Official Account: How to Apply

A WeChat Official Account is important for posting, being searched and following. Here are the steps to set one up if you haven't already. The first two steps are required by WeChat before the account is ready to use and the third is key to setting up an appropriate brand image from the start. [Click here](#) to create the official account.

KEY STEP	PROCESS	MATERIAL	LEADING TIME	FEE
Step 1	REGISTRATION	1. Company Registration Certificate or Business License: Photo or scanned copy of the original, or the copy with the company seal on it after scanning 2. Admin Contact with ID/Passport/Driver License info and cellphone number 3. An email account for account registration and log in	1-3 working days	FREE
Step 2	VERIFICATION	<b>Under Mainland China Entity:</b> 1. Company Registration Certificate or Business License: Photo or scanned copy of the original, or the copy with the company seal on it after scanning 2. The contact person's ID info 3. Application letter 4. Company Bank Account info (in Mainland China) 5. Other supporting materials ( If you choose to name after a trademark, please provide the right Trademark Registration Certificate or Trademark Authorization).	1-3 working days	300 RMB/TIME
		<b>Under Overseas Entity:</b> 1. Company Registration Certificate or Business License Photo or scanned copy of the original, or the copy with the company seal on it after scanning 2. Colour scanned copy of the contact person's ID card on both sides or Passport/Driver's license 3. Scanned copy of the application letter with an official seal. First, you need to download and fill out the application letter available in simplified Chinese, traditional Chinese, English, Japanese or South Korean 4. Phone bills of the contact person. If it can't be offered, then you can offer the Statement of the office telephone number (with the company seal on it) or Bank Statement 5. Other supporting materials ( If you choose to name after a trademark, please provide the right Trademark Registration Certificate or Trademark Authorization)	7-15 working days	99 USD/TIME Two ways of arranging payment: WeChat pay / Credit card pay (Support Visa / Master)
Step 3	SETUP	1. Brand Logo 2. Brand Intro in 140 words 3. WeChat account welcome message, auto-reply message, customized menu design, etc.	At least 3 working days	Varies

# WeChat Account Benchmarking: University of Melbourne:

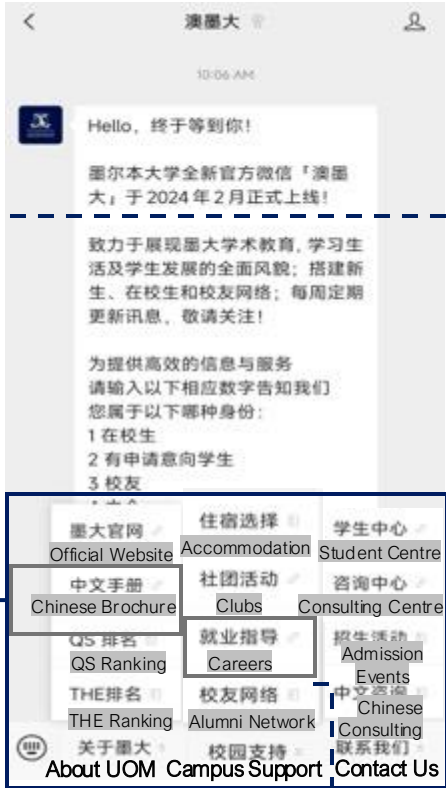
Although universities have larger budgets, we can learn from them such as user-friendly guidance, timely information, effortless and consistent branding design



## Welcome Message

User-friendly orientation to provide specific services to followers based on their roles like:

1. Current students
  2. Prospective applicants
  3. Alumni
  4. Agents
  5. Partner organizations
  6. Public
- (Enter a number to trigger an automated message/post or redirect to a link.)



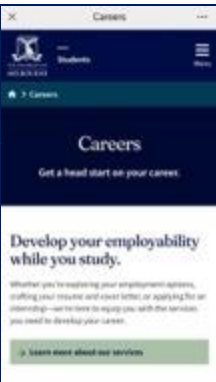
## Customised Menu

A key portal to promote the university (QS Ranking, alumni, etc.) and reply to the key concerns for campus life like accommodation, careers and consulting events.



## Latest Chinese Brochure

It's very thoughtful and user-friendly to provide a Chinese brochure in a shared document for Chinese parents and students to learn comprehensively about the university, but sometimes it can be a bit troublesome when switching to it.



## Careers

Not all instructions and documents are available in Chinese, but it would be better to offer a reader-friendly Chinese version that addresses key application concerns, such as career prospects.



2024 ARWU | UOM continues to lead the way, ranking as No. 1 in Australia

## Consistent branding – Header

## Consistent branding – Ending



## Post Design

It's important to ensure that the header and ending pictures/GIFs are consistent with the branding visual guidelines. Simply using clean lines, icons, and well-selected images in an orderly arrangement can make the reading experience very comfortable.





# WeChat Account Benchmarking: Shenzhen Institute of Information Technology

Localised guidance to address Chinese students, post design that gives a lively feel



## Welcome Message

User-friendly orientation to provide automated messages to major inquiries, clubs, guidelines for residence transfer (a localised concern), VR campus.



## Customised Menu

This menu is more localised to meet the practical needs of domestic students, from accessing information to checking admissions and navigating campus life.

## Post Design

Visually, SZIOIT's posts often lack a consistent brand colour and layout, appearing more colourful, flexible, and vibrant, but they are also easy to curate if using modules and templates. Posts from domestic institutions' WeChat accounts targeting students are primarily designed by in-campus students, giving these posts a lively and more informal feel.



# WeChat Account Benchmarking: Other examples that were smart

Initiatives don't always cost too much, such as holistic information, timely channel videos to add fresh views from on-campus students

## Welcome Message:

- A relatively brief intro of the institution is often better than trying to say too much
- A user-friendly orientation to provide specific services to followers based on their needs, the most common being:
  1. About the institution
  2. Programs Offered
  3. How to Apply
  4. Contact Us

## WeChat Channel Videos

Releasing weekly videos is ideal, each only needs to be approximately 90 seconds long, updated promptly. These videos can be sourced from an institution's official social media platforms, featuring Chinese captions, making them user-friendly and enhancing the promotional content.

## Customised Brochure

Good examples of institution brochures provide more detailed guidelines, covering everything from city exploration to scholarships and payment. Once a brochure is selected, it can also be valuable to include relevant posts written in Chinese, making them easy to read, save, and share.

## Post Design

Posts should all be consistent, featuring an institution's branding colours and themes along with a similar layout. At the end of posts, it is a good idea to include hashtags, which link to other relevant content.



# WeChat Account Benchmarking: NZ Leading Institutions

## Need to be More Reader-Friendly and Chinese-Localised

The WeChat accounts of New Zealand's PTEs should enhance the engagement of their welcome messages to better guide users in finding information. Additionally, offering Chinese-localised content (e.g. student guide brochure) would help users better understand the information.

It's positive that many PTEs and language schools have WeChat accounts. However, these accounts could be improved to get much greater performance, which symbolise that you understand Chinese student's needs.

Below are some examples of basic improvements that could be made:

- Many welcome messages are as simple as 'Thanks for following me,' and some of them are even only in English. Many posts are written in English. These should be in Chinese and utilise the opportunity of the first point of contact – see previous pages
- There is no Chinese version of the student guide in many cases, provide a Chinese version
- Users seeking information are often redirected to various sections of English official websites. Make these Chinese
- Many accounts feel outdated with posts and even static content like 'Contact us' not updated since 2020. The date of updating is transparent on WeChat. Update.
- Content such as 'Entry requirements for Chinese students' or 'Guidelines' need to appear up-to-date and should be updated yearly, at surface level at a minimum
- Links to '404 page not found' need to be fixed.

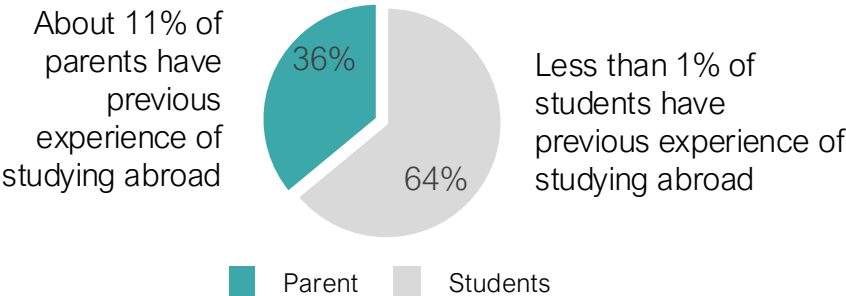


# SECTION 7

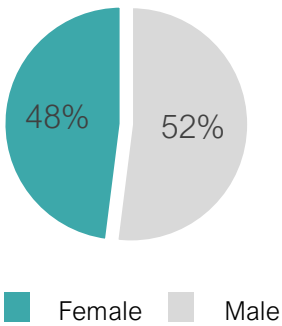
## Appendix

# Respondent Details: Overall Demographics, N=699

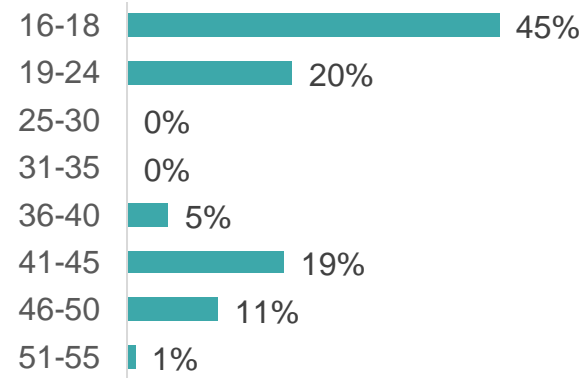
RESPONDENT TYPE, N=699 (TOTAL)



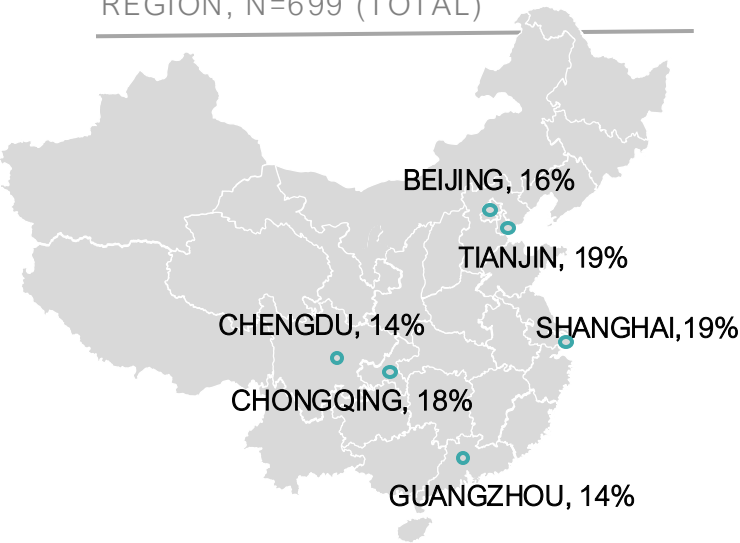
GENDER, N=699 (TOTAL)



AGE, N=699 (TOTAL)



REGION, N=699 (TOTAL)

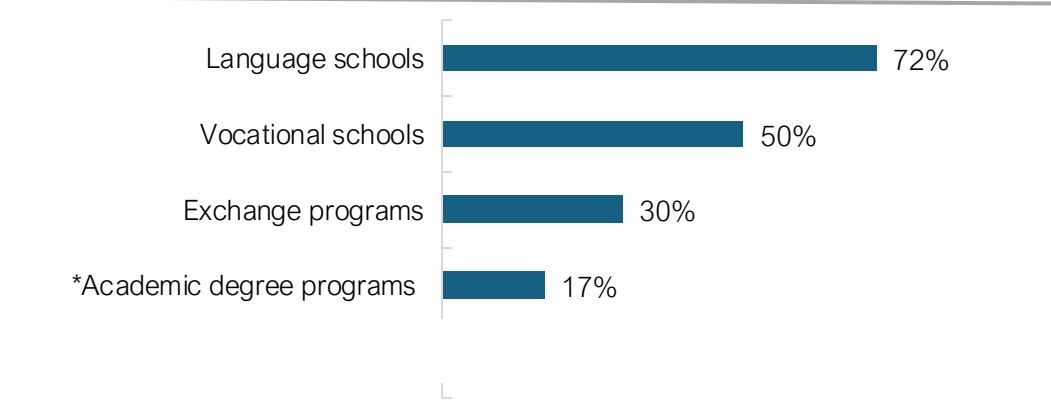


Note: If students and parents show significantly different opinions on certain questions, we'll discuss them separately. If their views align, the results will be combined.

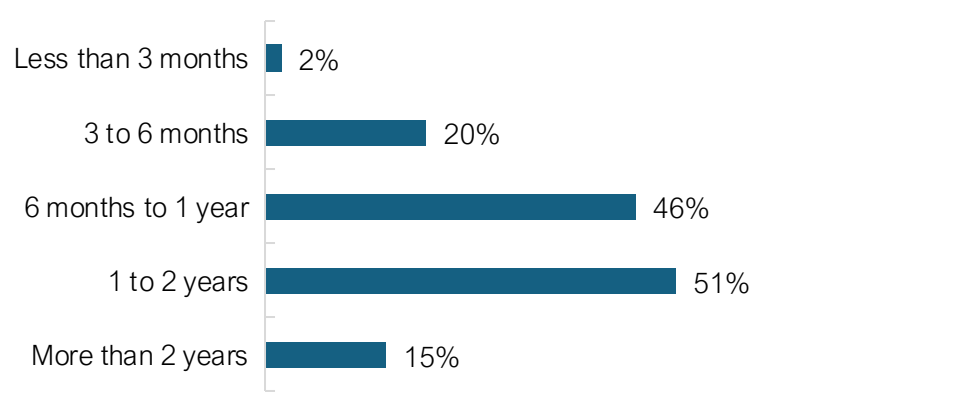
chinaskinny™

# Respondent Details: Preference for Studying Abroad, N=699

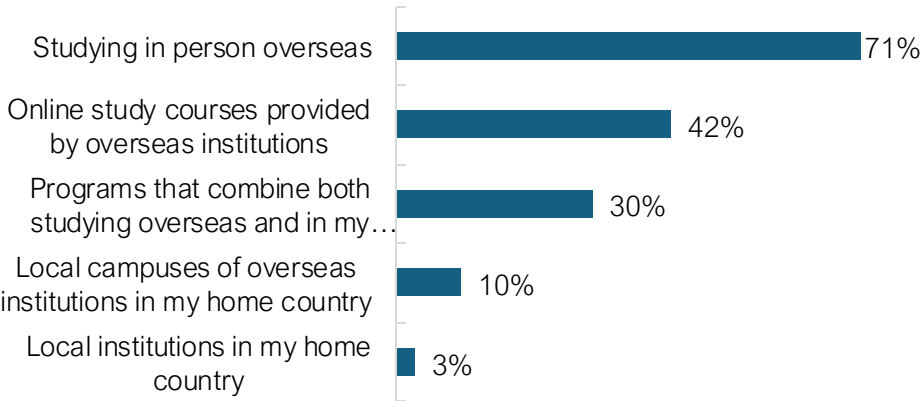
INTERESTED TYPES OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, N=699, MR



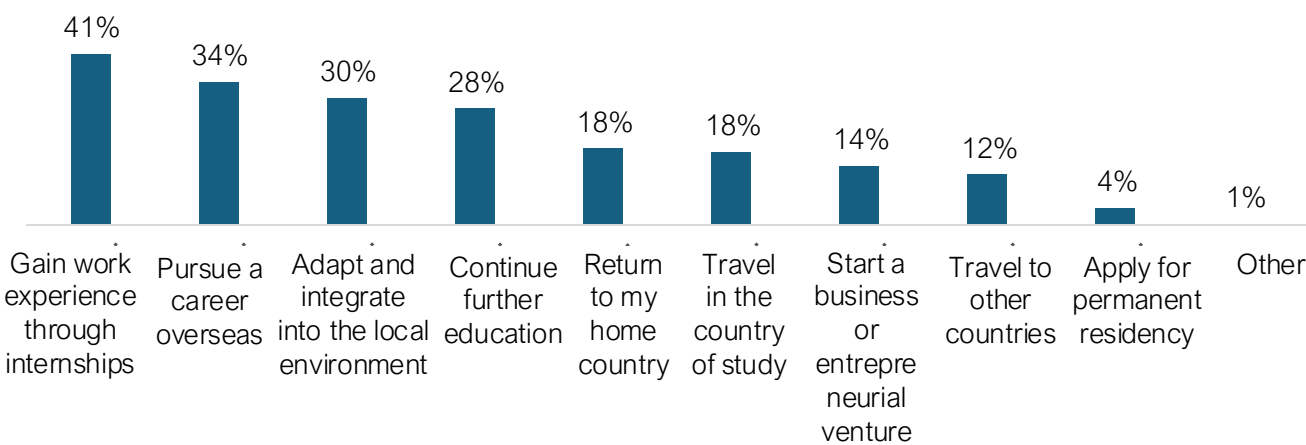
DESIRED LENGTH OF PROGRAM, N=699, MR



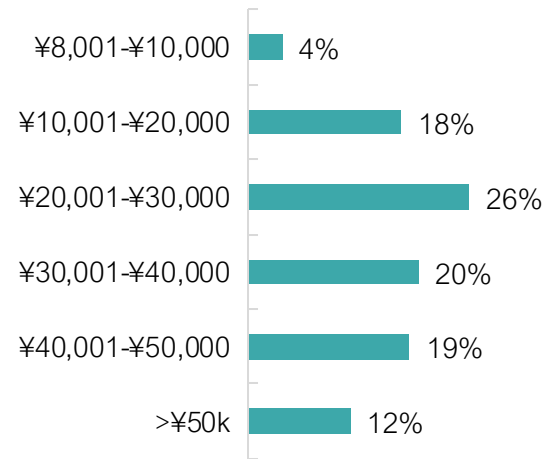
INTERESTED STUDY OPTIONS, N=699, MR



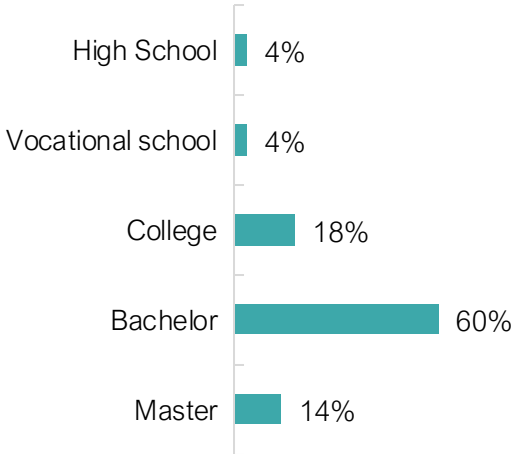
PLANS AFTER COMPLETING COURSES OVERSEAS, N=699, MR



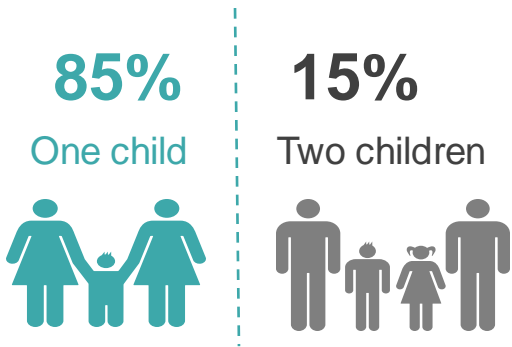
MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME, N=252 (PARENTS)



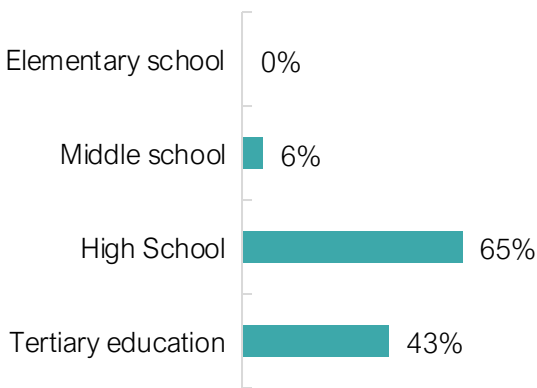
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED, N=252 (PARENTS)



NUMBER OF KIDS, N=252 (PARENTS)



STAGE OF EDUCATION OF KIDS, N=252 (PERENTS)



# Experts Details

<p><b>Sherry</b> Director of Oceania (ANZ) Dept. Huatong Xinnuo Int'l Cultural Exchange Center Limited (Hti)</p>	<p><b>Hou Fei</b> Program Coordinator (AU&amp;NZ) New Oriental</p>	<p><b>Sky</b> Marketing Director New Zealand &amp; Asia Bright Can-Achieve Limited</p>	<p><b>Michelle</b> AU &amp; NZ Manager EIC Guangzhou</p>
<p>With nearly 10 years at Huatong Xinnuo, manages the Asia-Pacific department, specializing in placements to Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia, and Dubai.</p>	<p>An alum of a New Zealand polytechnic, has 12 years of experience in Australia and New Zealand education consulting, working in both advisory and institutional recruitment roles.</p>	<p>We have been doing the business line of Canada, the United States and New Zealand since 2008, so the New Zealand side of the business is something that we have been doing since the beginning of our company.</p>	<p>Deeply involved in the Australia and New Zealand education sector since 2008, advancing from consultant to department manager at EIC Guangzhou.</p>
<p><b>Glacier</b> AU&amp;NZ Countries Manager GEA</p>	<p><b>Maggie</b> Tianjin Chensheng Education Consulting Co.,Ltd</p>	<p><b>Peter</b> General Manager Huaying Education</p>	<p><b>Deng</b> JIL NZ Consulting Department, Study Abroad Consultant</p>
<p>With over 15 years in the study abroad industry, Glacier specializes in Australia and New Zealand, handling student applications across various educational institutions, including language schools and PTEs.</p>	<p>Nearly two decades of expertise across a diverse range of countries, including English-speaking nations, Europe, and Asia, and is highly knowledgeable about New Zealand's educational system.</p>	<p>Almost 20 years of experience in the study abroad industry</p>	<p>Two years experience in education consulting, recently transitioning to focus on Australia and New Zealand, noting an increasing demand for New Zealand study programs in Chongqing.</p>