

THE CAREER DISPATCH

INSIGHTS ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH ASIA



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2023: Trends that will impact higher education globally

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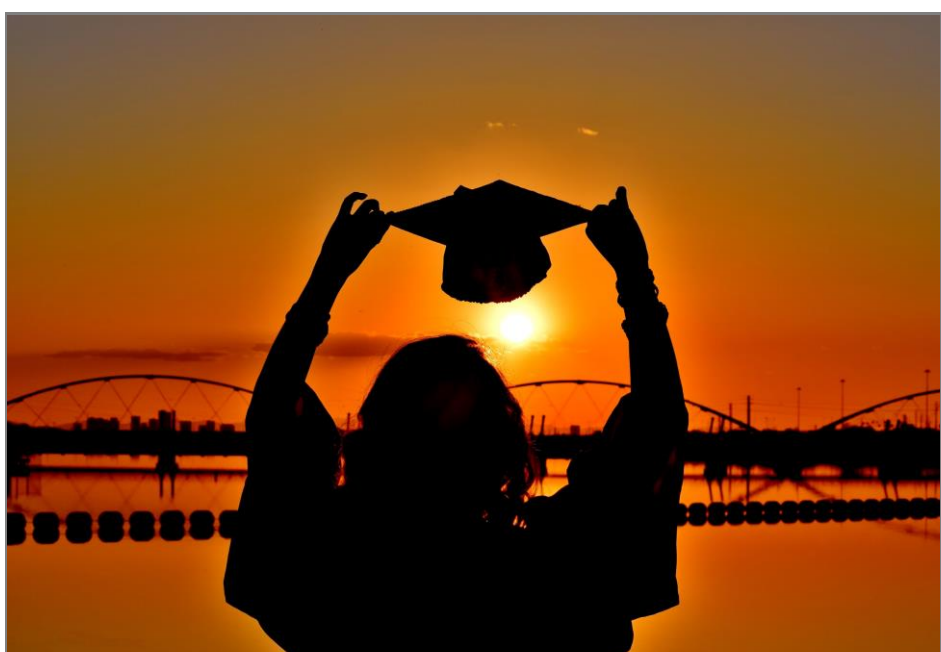
Introduction

Given the region's vast population and the developing nature of its economies, South Asia presents an immense opportunity for higher education institutions. It is the second largest in terms of student enrolments and according to recent World Bank data accounts for 18% of all tertiary education students globally. While the governments of these nations are involved in the development of primary education, the private sector dominates higher education. In India and Nepal, private education institutions, including universities, colleges, and stand-alone institutions, account for over 65% of higher education enrolment; in Bangladesh and Afghanistan, the share is over 40%; and in Pakistan and Sri Lanka, private HEIs cover 20% of all enrolment. The top seven destination countries chosen by South Asian students are the USA, UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Germany, and China, but new markets, such as Turkey and Ireland, are emerging as alternative choices by students. The region has many opportunities, but it requires a dependable and knowledgeable local presence to manage agent, school, and university relationships in order to continually succeed in an increasingly competitive and ever-changing environment. I hope you will enjoy this edition of The Career Dispatch

Tarun Gupta
Global Managing Partner, T&A Consulting

JANUARY 2023 ISSUE

2022 was the year of revival for the international education industry as demand for studying abroad boomed after two years of pandemic-induced setbacks. As we step into the new year, here's a look at the trends that will shape up studying abroad in 2023!



Trends that will shape up international education in 2023

A look at what to expect in higher education sector globally in 2023, as the world faces a looming economic recession, more demand for study abroad from students, and increasing competition among countries to attract students.

Skills Gap

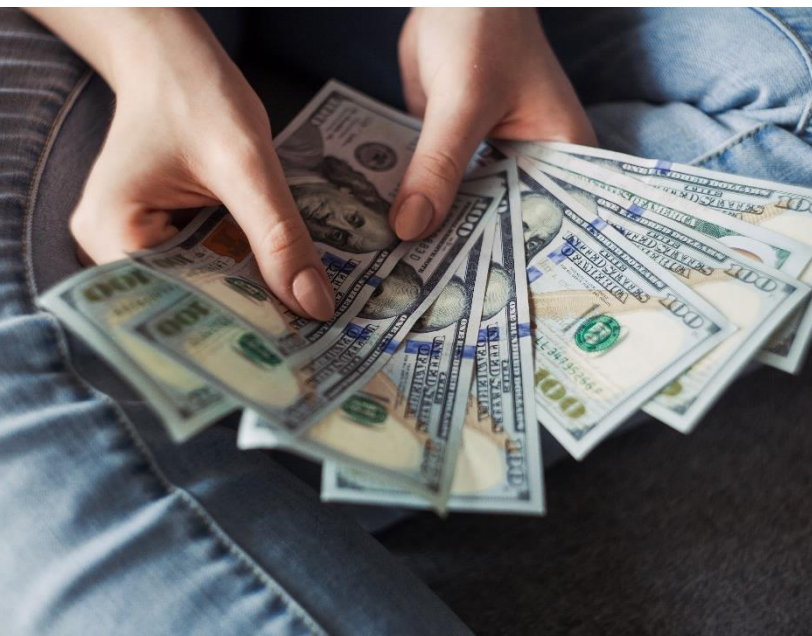
There has been a consistent rise in the skills gap rate in workforce across industries in the past few years. It became even more glaring during the pandemic, when companies had to pivot the way, they functioned and technology assumed overpowering importance as remote work became a reality.

According to the report by Imarticus Learning, a tech-based professional education brand, the surge in demand for upskilling has increased by about 50% in tier 2 and 3 cities in India. According to the *2023 Workplace Learning Trends* report by Udemy, an online learning and teaching marketplace, the top skills in demand include business, technical and personal skills. 2022 saw a 49% annual increase in time spent learning technical skills, the report revealed.

Inflation

Universities in many parts of the world, especially Europe, are facing difficulties in the face of high levels of inflation and rising cost of living. As energy prices shoot up due to the war between Russia and Ukraine, the situation is bleak right now for HEIs as well as students in Europe. A looming recession will also mean the job market will be depressed which is a primary concern for Indian students.

Consequentially, studying abroad will get more expensive in the immediate future and many students will be forced to take larger loans and seek scholarships from universities. They may also search for alternative study destinations with study options that are easier on their pockets.



What may add to the worries of recession and inflation?

- Increasing tuition costs in the US
- Accomodation shortage in Europe
- Visa backlogs in Canada, Australia, and the US
- Further restrictions on student visas and dependant numbers in UK

✚ More undergraduate students to choose studying abroad

With rising spending power, easy availability of education loans, and liberal post-study work visa policies of countries like Canada, Australia, and UK, there has been a steady rise in the number of undergraduate students going abroad for higher studies. This is especially true for UK, where undergraduate courses are for 3 years, unlike majority of other countries that offer 4-year UG degree. Additionally, the youth is increasingly aiming at moving to foreign shores to live and work; they are making this decision early on to better their chances of getting residency rights.

✚ Hybrid study model here to stay

While hybrid learning was a necessity during the pandemic, its benefits have been widely accepted by education institutes as well as students. Accepted as the future of education by many, hybrid learning is here to stay in 2023 as well.

A blend of online and classroom learning for degree courses abroad is cost-effective and makes higher education overseas equitable, sustainable, and democratized. The model has also found acceptance in the form of university partnerships between countries, with the most recent example being the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between India and the UK in 2022 for the mutual recognition of academic qualifications.



✚ Diversity and mental health to be important areas of focus for HEIs

As interest in education abroad among students and the numbers of student recruitment for universities reach newer heights, ensuring culturally diverse campuses that care about students' overall wellbeing becomes more important for HEIs.

Universities are increasingly embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in their mission and value statements, as well as their academic and training programmes. These are important steps to not just foster a culturally vibrant atmosphere but to also position themselves as attractive inclusive places of learning.

✚ Tech and STEM courses to stay in high demand

While there has been news of job cuts in tech giants in the recent months and signs of a looming recession paint a gloomy picture, the demand for courses majoring in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) continues to grow and will do so in 2023. A World Economic Forum report estimates that by 2025, 97 million new roles may emerge for STEM.

There is wider understanding that future-ready jobs are going to center around science and tech. High employability remains a significant reason behind more learners choosing STEM-based programs. There will be more career opportunities in fields related to Artificial intelligence, Machine Learning, IoT, Data Analytics, and Cyber Security as well.

News and Updates

Number of Indian students moving abroad for higher education hits record high in 2022



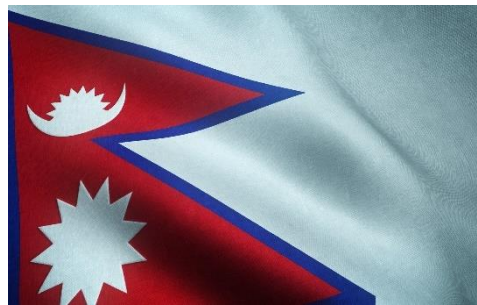
The number of Indian students moving to foreign destinations for higher studies almost reached to 650,000 lakhs mark in 2022 till 30 November 2022. As per the latest figures by the Bureau of Immigration, 648,678 Indian students received student visas this year to study abroad. This is the highest in the past 5 years and has surpassed pre-pandemic numbers.

Additionally, Indians also make up the second largest cohort of international students in OECD countries as per a report by International Migration Outlook. They are also “strongly overrepresented” in STEM subjects, particularly in engineering, as per the report.



First-ever Study in Italy event held in India

In the first-ever Study in Italy event in Mumbai, India, 15 universities from Italy showcased what the country has to offer to students who want to study art, design, architecture, medicine, etc. Conducted by Uni-Italia, the official Italian centre for the promotion of higher education programmes, the event saw participation from universities like Università di Macerata, Università di Padova, IED, and Università di Milano, who offered postgraduate, undergraduate as well as one-year specialisation programmes.



Tuskegee University partners with Agriculture and Forestry University, Nepal

Tuskegee University, US, has received \$5 million from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to establish a partnership with Agriculture and Forestry University, Nepal. Tuskegee University will implement its innovation in agricultural research, education, and extension services to the rural communities of Nepal in collaboration with Agriculture and Forestry University and Sathguru Inc.



Bangladesh: Study abroad dreams suffer as banks face dollar crisis

Banks in Bangladesh are taking a conservative approach to opening new files for students planning to study abroad and to send tuition fees and other expenses due to the dollar crunch they are facing. This is creating hurdles in the study abroad plans of scores of students who are unable to pay their fee to the universities they hope to study at. According to Bangladesh Bank, in the 2021-22 fiscal year, \$414.50 million were sent abroad for education related services.



France sets aim to train about 20,000 Indian students by 2025

During a visit to the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology, Delhi, to explore Indo-France collaborations, French Minister for Digital Transition and Telecommunications, Jean-Noël Barrot, stated French government's aim to host and train 0.5 million international students by 2025, which would include nearly 20,000 Indian students. IIIT Delhi is also part of the project of a new Franco-Indian Campus on Health which is to be operational from 2023.



India and Germany sign migration & mobility partnership agreement

India and Germany signed an agreement on a Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership on 5 December 2022. The agreement aims to facilitate the movement of citizens of both to study, do research and work in each other's country. The German Skilled Immigration Act 2020 has enhanced the opportunities for workers from other countries.

The partnership also seeks to ensure joint and dual degrees for Indian students by way of collaboration between Indian and German HEIs at the university level.



AI-Driven student recruitment platform enters Sri Lanka

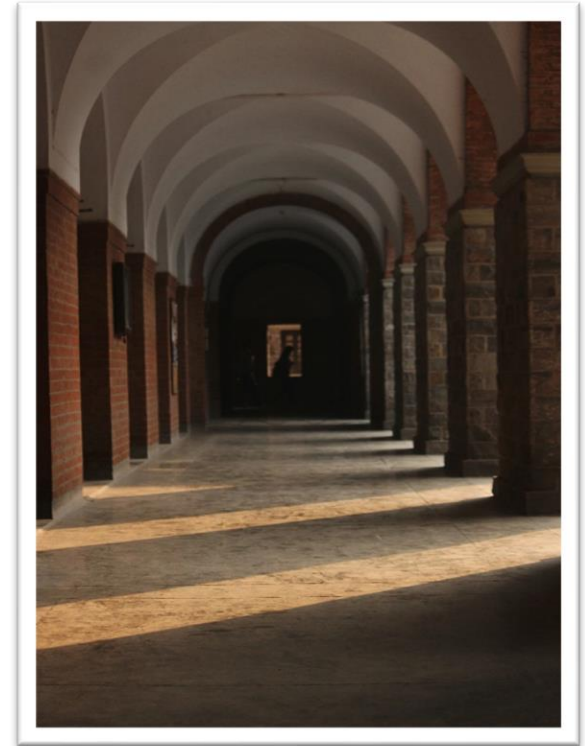
Study abroad solutions provider Infinite Group is set to launch an AI-driven global student recruitment platform in Sri Lanka. Called I-Unite, the platform "helps students and recruitment partners to look for courses abroad using artificial intelligence." With an average yearly growth rate of around 4.5% through 2027, Sri Lanka is predicted to have one of the fastest-growing territorial enrolments globally. The platform emphasizes on markets in the Indian sub-continent, Africa, Mauritius, UAE, and Gulf countries.



South Asian students lead the influx of international students into Australia

Higher education institutes in Australia are facing an influx of applications from international students, with some universities getting responses exceeding pre-pandemic levels, especially from South Asia. Applications from Indian students at the University of Queensland for instance increased by over 150%. At University of Wollongong, which is also set to be the first Australian university to have a physical teaching base in India, India is the number one source country, followed by Pakistan and Nepal.

News in focus: UGC India's Draft Regulations for foreign universities



India has finally set the ball rolling on the entry of foreign universities by releasing the draft of University Grants Commission (Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India) Regulations, 2023.

The entry of foreign educational institutes in the country is an important plank of the internationalization of higher education objective of the National Education Policy.

Here is a lowdown on what the draft regulations are and their significance for foreign institutes looking to set base in India:

✚ The entry

According to the draft regulations, foreign Higher Educational Institutions (FHEIs) will require the approval of UGC to set up campuses in India. They will get initial approval for a period of ten years, which will be renewed in the ninth year, subject to meeting of certain criterion.

✚ The method

An institute can either establish a campus through the Companies Act, by setting up a company or through the Limited Liability Partner Act which involves having a joint venture with an established institute and then opening a branch in India.

The recent guidelines are different from the ones announced in October 2022 in that foreign HEIs can set up campus anywhere in the country and not just in Gujarat's GIFT (Gujarat International Finance Tec-City) City.

✚ Scholarship Requirements

The draft regulations mandate that based on an evaluation process, full or partial need-based scholarships may be provided by the foreign HEIs from funds such as endowment funds, alumni donations, tuition revenues and other sources. The component of need remains to be defined.

✚ Qualification Requirements

Foreign HEIs are required to ensure that qualifications for the faculty at the Indian campus is at par with the country of origin. Also, foreign faculty in these institutes will need to stay in India for a considerable period—at least for one or two semesters as per the draft rules.

Additionally, qualifications awarded to students in the Indian campus should be recognized and accepted as equivalent to corresponding qualifications in the main campus in the country of origin.

UGC Draft Regulations: **What works for foreign HEIs**



RELAXED ELIGIBILITY

As per the draft regulations 2023 “**top 500 foreign universities**” in global rankings are eligible to set up base in India. Earlier the requirement was set at only the top-100 ranked universities.

The ranking will be decided by the UGC “from time to time”.

Additionally, any institute that is a “**reputed institution in its home jurisdiction**” is also eligible to set up shop in India.



AUTONOMY

HEIs will be **free to decide the fee structure and admission criteria** for both Indian and overseas students, keeping it “transparent and reasonable”.

They can decide “qualifications, salary structure, and other conditions of service for appointing faculty and staff either from India or abroad”, and will **not be bound by laws such as reservation** in admissions as well as employment etc.



REPATRIATION OF PROFITS

The draft rules allow for a **smooth repatriation of profits earned by foreign HEIs in India** under the rules and regulations of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) 1999. However, they must submit audit reports and annual reports to the UGC “certifying that [their] operations...in India are in compliance with FEMA 1999” and other relevant government policies.

What works for students

1. No Equivalence Requirement

At present, all Indian students with foreign degrees are required to get an equivalence certificate from the Association of Indian Universities. The draft regulations waive off this requirement for the degrees granted by the foreign HEIs in India.

2. Safeguarding students' interests

The campuses of foreign HEIs will not be outside the purview of anti-ragging and other criminal laws and UGC will have the right to inspect them at any time.



UGC Draft Regulations: **The challenges that remain**



PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The draft regulations mandates that the foreign HEIs looking to enter Indian higher education sector should “arrange for adequate physical infrastructure”.

This provision can be potentially problematic for institutions not ready to go for major infrastructural investments in the beginning of this process.



SENSITIVITY AROUND NATIONAL INTEREST

As per the draft regulations, foreign HEIs “shall not offer any such programme of study which jeopardizes the national interest of India or the standards of higher education in India”. This can be a subject of uncertainty and lead to questions about curriculum. The foreign HEIs and the government will need to work together to reach consensus around such issues.



NO ONLINE / ODL CLASSES

The draft regulations rule out the option of online and Open Distance Learning (ODL) courses and only allows foreign HEIs to offer physical offline classes.

This regulation may prove to be barriers for educational institutes that intend to enter the Indian higher education market by initially offering online courses.

What may not work for students



1. Freedom to HEIs to decide fees can put students at disadvantage

Since the draft guidelines give foreign HEIs in India the freedom to decide different fees for different programmes, courses with higher market value have the potential to be more expensive, reducing their accessibility to many students.

2. Uncertainty about acceptance of equivalence status of degrees

While the new guidelines have waived off equivalence requirements for students studying at Indian branches of foreign HEIs, there is still uncertainty about whether these degrees will find acceptance by the employers in the home countries of the campuses.

T&A at work: **Events and initiatives**

Talent Boost team at Techfest IIT Bombay

Team T&A Consulting, Knowledge Partner for the Talent Boost programme in India, was delighted to be a part of Asia's largest science and technology festival—Techfest, IIT Bombay from 16th to 18th December 2022.

Live broadcast from the Techfest on 16th December, the fourth webinar of the '**Future is Made in Finland**' series was conducted with insights on how deep tech can create an impact on the world.

Prior to the webinar, T&A conducted an outreach initiative to universities, colleges, and research scholars who wish to grow their tech careers in Finland.

On Days 2 and 3 of the Techfest, T&A's team interacted with students on how they can advance their careers in Finland through various study, work, and start-up opportunities.



Talent Boost: Future with Finland seminar in Bengaluru

Business Finland, together with the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland and the Embassy of Finland in India, conducted a seminar on 'Future with Finland' on the 16th of November 2022. The event focused on why Finland is an attractive country for studies, work, and research.

As Knowledge Partners for the Talent Boost programme in India, T&A Consulting conducted an outreach drive to universities, colleges, and research scholars for networking opportunities with the event's delegation and to get acquainted with opportunities in Finland, specifically for research, funding, and university collaborations.

Among the speakers at the event were Mr. Shyam Mundhada, Head of M&A of Infosys, and Mr. Atte Jääskeläinen, Director General, Higher Education and Research Policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland, who gave insights on why Finland is ranked as a top country in innovation, and. Also present were Mr. Ujjwal Trivedi, Director of Headstart Network Foundation, who shared his thoughts on connecting startup ecosystems of India and Finland, and Mr. Satish K, Head of APAC Standardization at Nokia Bell Labs.



Choose New Jersey: Visit to GIFT City

In the Union Budget 2022-23, the finance minister proposed that “world-class foreign universities and institutions will be allowed in the GIFT City to offer courses in Financial Management, FinTech, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

As per this announcement, foreign universities that operate from GIFT will be exempted from domestic regulations. They would be governed by separate regulations, providing a light-touch regulatory environment, aimed at offering ease of doing business without interference from domestic regulations and regulators.

In light of this amendment, T&A Consulting, India representative of Choose New Jersey visited the GIFT City and met with Mr. Dipesh Shah - Executive Director (Development) at International Financial Services Centres Authority to discuss a collaboration with New Jersey educational institutions for a potential presence in the GIFT City.



Queen's University Belfast: Career Counselling of more than 700 students in 32 cities across South Asia

The South Asia team at Queen's University Belfast has been actively working to promote the university and its undergraduate and postgraduate courses in South Asia. From November 22 to December 22, the team organized 75 activities in 65 educational fairs in 32 cities across South Asia, which included career counseling and workshops for more than 700 students. These workshops were designed to give them a better understanding of the opportunities available to them at Queen's University Belfast.

In addition to promoting the university's undergraduate and postgraduate courses, the South Asia team also did outreach activities for the International Sustainability Summit – Winter School 2022 by QUB. This Summit was designed to stimulate thinking and accelerate key debate on the pressing sustainability challenges which our planet is facing today. The summit was primarily aimed at potential international partners and students, providing them with valuable information on the opportunities available at Queen's University Belfast.

The South Asia team has been successful in promoting Queen's University Belfast and its courses in South Asia. Through their efforts, they have been able to reach a large number of potential students and provide them with valuable information about the opportunities available at the university, as well as the Sustainability Summit.



QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

QUB WINTER SCHOOL 2023
WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND THE SUMMIT?

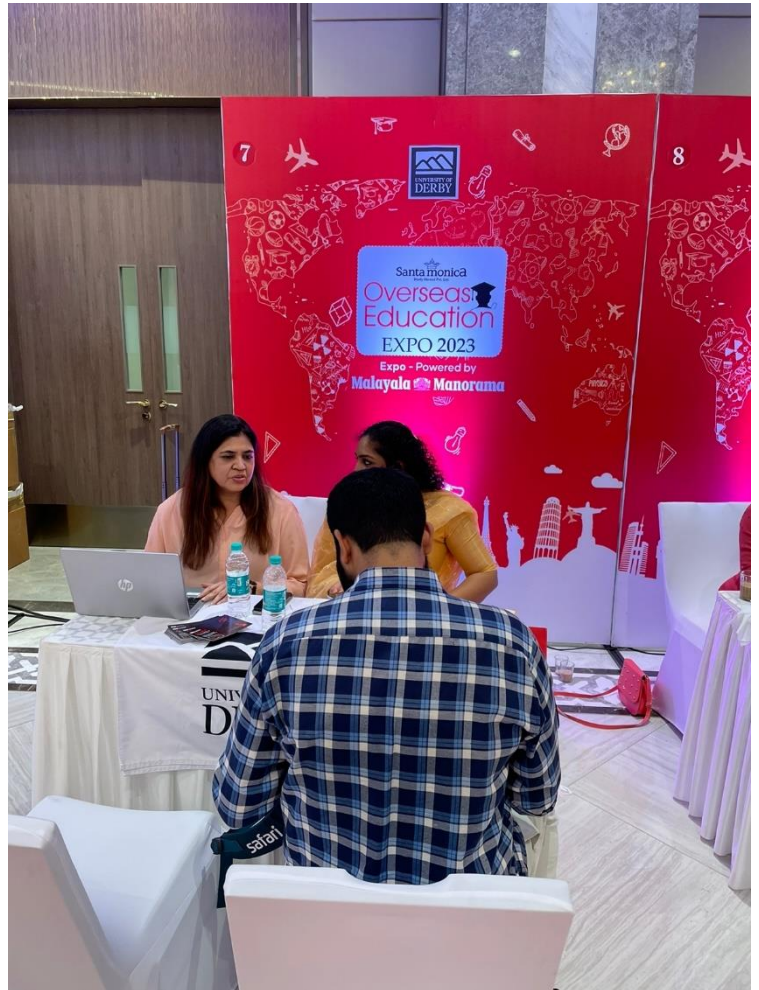
- ★ ENGAGE IN KEY DEBATE ACROSS A WIDE RANGE OF ENGAGING SEMINAR THEMES
- 🤝 HELP TO SHAPE FUTURE THINKING AND POLICY ON PUBLIC AND PLANETARY HEALTH ISSUES
- 👜 ACCESS IN-DEPTH VIDEO TALKS FROM LEADING ACADEMICS ACROSS DISCIPLINES
- 🌐 BUILD NETWORKS WITH OTHER STUDENTS INTERESTED IN DEBATE AND MAKING AN IMPACT

University of Derby: Counselling of more than 1000 students across 20 cities

With a series of recruitment fairs, school events and college events, the outreach to both the undergraduate and the postgraduate segment by Team Derby at T&A Consulting has been aggressive and immense across India.

Between October and December 2022, the team was on the road for events covering more than 20 cities and at the same time catering to the January 2023 student intake. With more than 20 agent fairs, 5 school events and 3 college events, the team counselled more than 1000 students across the country covering Amritsar, Trivandrum, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Patiala, Chandigarh, Delhi, Surat, Vadodara, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Pune, Kochi, Coimbatore, Trivandrum, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Bangalore.

This gave a huge boost to the brand image of University of Derby which is known for its industry relevant curriculum, affordable fees, and student friendly city.



ABOUT T&A CONSULTING

INDIA & SOUTH ASIA EDUCATION REPRESENTATION SERVICES

T&A Consulting is an international consulting practice to government economic development organisations, higher education institutions (HEIs), and private businesses.

We specialise in developing and successfully executing market entry and growth strategies across the many markets in which we operate. As a global practice, we have a subsidiary in Canada and representative offices in Europe and the UK.

With a strong belief in the age-old adage “quality is the best business plan”, and going against the more traditional approach of representing multiple HEIs, we understand that HEIs want more than just a marketing function in-market. HEIs want to build sustainable brand recognition in the South Asia region, which is the fastest growing geography for international student mobility in the world.

Therefore, we made a deliberate choice to introduce a unique reward-based partner approach to a limited number of HEIs, ensuring each one of them has dedicated resources and the full support of our experienced marketing, representation, and admissions capabilities.



T&A CONSULTING | SERVICES

In Market and Operational Support

- Assistance in developing strategies and implementation of plans to recruit students in line with entry requirements.
- Management and reassessment of existing agents' network.
- Appointment of new agents in previously unexplored South Asian markets including Tier 2,3 and 4 cities in India.
- Maintenance of data on market specific changes, admission requirements and course information.
- Market Intelligence towards new interventions including new programmes, agent engagements and rewards and scholarships.



Get in touch with our University Engagement Manager



Arjun Mukundd
Senior Engagement Manager
Email: amukundd@taglobalgroup.com





Event Management & Logistics

- Design, schedule and implement physical and virtual events
- On-site logistics, AV equipment, catering, venue set-up
- Co-ordinate inter and intra city travel and transport



Industry Integration /Employability

- Development of industry linkages to boost student work placements
- Partnerships with private companies with research and innovation centres to provide hands-on research experience to students



Marketing & PR Services

- Brand positioning and strategy development
- Social media strategy creation and implementation
- Managing social media platforms
- Designing advertising campaigns
- Strategic planning and execution of public relations initiatives



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