

International boarding and you!

If you are a boarding professional who has recognised qualifications and boarding experience, it is very likely you would be able to find employment in a boarding residence in an international setting. However there are other options;

1. Volunteer in a boarding residence in a developing country,
2. Visit boarding residences in other countries and observe boarding practice in a different culture,
3. Establish links with a boarding residence in another country. Students can communicate with boarders from a different context and you could even organise visits,
4. Adopt a residence in a developing country and work out ways you can support and encourage them,
5. Develop or be involved in an 'on line' forum that will connect boarding professionals from different cultures.

BTA (Boarding Training Australia) trains in Australia, the Philippines, Germany, Vanuatu and has one trainee in Nigeria.

Where are the boarding schools?

Some countries have a strong boarding tradition, particularly the United Kingdom, India, Australia and New Zealand. Other countries like the USA and Canada, have boarding schools but the tradition is not as strong. For example in the USA about .5% of students attend boarding schools while in the UK it is around 1%. The numbers below are approximate but give an indication of where boarding schools are in the world.

UK 770	Malaysia 58	Philippines 17
USA 284	Nepal 34	Germany 16
Australia 234	Pakistan 26	Thailand 11
Africa 147	Ireland 24	Singapore 10
India 120	Canada 23	France 9
Africa 90	Switzerland 22	
New Zealand 66	Hong Kong 19	

UK boarding expanding in hard times.

While the 2008 Global Financial Crisis saw many countries (including Australia) suffer a decline in boarding numbers, UK boarding



actually held up and then continued to increase. In the 2010 / 11 period, boarding grew by 1.7% and numbers for 7 - to 13-year-olds grew by more than 5%. The UK boarding industry quickly adopted more flexible approaches such as opening boarding to younger students and developing “flexi-boarding”, which allows pupils to stay a few nights a week at school if their parents choose this option, rather than having necessarily to commit to full-time boarding. The increasingly international reach of UK boarding schools also proved an advantage, as across the independent sector as a whole (including day pupils as well as boarders), the number of pupils whose parents live outside the UK rose by 5.5 per cent in 2010-11.

Switzerland – boarding is business.

Switzerland has had an interesting approach to boarding schools because it has fostered international private boarding schools for foreign students as a business integral to the country's economy. Their boarding schools offer instruction in major languages and have a large number of quality facilities organized through the Swiss Federation of Private Schools. They treat information about the schools and students in much the same way they deal with banking – very little information is available.



Le Rosy, Switzerland

TGS Think Global School - a school that moves every term!

This is a secondary boarding school that moves to a new city every term. Students study the international baccalaureate and immerse themselves in nine countries over three years, undertaking a challenging curriculum administered by teachers, experts, and local guides that culminates in their official International Baccalaureate (IB) examinations at the end of year three. Throughout their studies, TGS students visit significant historical, cultural, and scientific sites, all while building new skills and relationships with those around them. The school is currently in Costa Rica and is heading to Greece next.

What is happening in Australia?

The Australian boarding scene suffers from a lack of data and research. While this is now changing and we are seeing a lot more research, there is still very little data available. It seems that the number of boarding schools has decreased and there has been a general decline in boarding over the past twenty years. Many smaller boarding residences have disappeared and even the more traditional boarding schools have seen a decline in the number of boarding students. Some schools have closed their boarding programs. The decline was probably caused by the change in farming communities as farms got a lot larger and required less people, so the

communities contracted. The 2008 GFC also affected Australian boarding as parents struggled to pay boarding fees. International students also declined dramatically as the Commonwealth Government changed visa requirements, and the dollar soared.

Notwithstanding the decline, Australia still has a very robust boarding industry with about 235 boarding residences currently operating across Australia. There is significant growth in Indigenous boarding, with the Commonwealth opening new residences and traditional boarding schools developing Indigenous cohorts. The AIEF (Australian Indigenous Education Foundation) have played a large role in this area, with scholarships and a very strong media presence publicizing success stories. Boarding Australia are currently involved in a project that will provide Indigenous parents with a parent association similar to the ICPA (Isolated Children's Parents' Association).

Organisations that list the "best boarding schools in the world" often include Australian Boarding schools, like Geelong Grammar.

The growth regions, Asia and Africa

Asia

A growing market of Asian parents wish to give their children a Western-style education while keeping them close to home. For these families, boarding schools are an attractive option, not just because of their proximity, but because their style of learning is seen as a gateway into Western education methods, which tend to differ from the Asian approach.



Oxford School Changzhou

Boarding schools in Asia typically offer several advantages over local public schools, such as smaller class sizes, more resources, better quality learning tools, more challenging curriculum, and a diverse range of extracurricular activities.

The intangibles are strong as well. For example, because expatriate Westerners comprise a high percentage of the student body at foreign-located boarding schools, local Asian students gain exposure to a culture and way of thinking that can help prepare them for college or a career abroad, should they choose that route.

The strong Western presence in Asia is also a factor in the expansion of foreign boarding schools. More than 15,000 British and almost 30,000 American expatriates are living in Hong Kong. As in the colonial past, expat locals tend to send their

children to schools that retain the educational traditions of their home countries.

From a governmental perspective, branch boarding schools are also seen as beneficial. While tertiary education abroad is seen as a plus, increasingly, Asian countries prefer their best talent to stay home during their formative years. Satellite boarding schools help to make that happen, and often benefit from generous loans and tax deals.

Toronto-based girls' school Branksome Hall, founded in 1903, opened an architecturally innovative 95,000 square metre campus in October 2012 on South Korea's Jeju Island, with the aid of a US \$170 million government loan. And the Hong Kong government set aside land in 2009 for the development of Harrow Hong Kong, a branch of the London-based boarding school that is the alma mater of Winston Churchill.



A typical example of west-to-east migration is the British boarding school Marlborough College. Founded in 1843, and counting Nick Drake and Kate Middleton among its famed alumni, it recently opened a 90 acre campus in Iskandar, Malaysia, near Singapore. The school took in its first class of 350 students in August 2012. The campus is part of a Malaysian government initiative to build an education hub in Iskandar, called EduCity at Nusajaya.

Other venerable British boarding schools that have expanded to Asia include:

- London's Dulwich College, one of the first private schools to branch out when it opened a campus in Suzhou, China, and which plans to open its seventh Asian school in Singapore in 2014.
- Brighton College, which opened in Abu Dhabi in September 2011.
- Wellington College, founded by Queen Victoria in 1859, and which opened in Tianjin, China, in September 2010.
- [Haileybury](#), which opened two schools in Kazakhstan – one in Almaty in 2007, and a second in Astana in 2011.
- [North London Collegiate School](#), founded in 1850, and established as of September 2011 in South Korea's Global Education City, located on Jeju Island.

ICEF Monitor

Africa

Africa already has a tradition of boarding schools, with over 140 Boarding schools. Boarding numbers are increasing across Africa and some African countries are sending significant numbers of students to UK Boarding schools.

Nigeria has 129 international schools and six boarding schools. The most populous nation in Africa, [Nigeria](#) has the combination of a rapidly growing population and burgeoning middle class which has given rise to a huge demand for quality education, as well as significant opportunities for foreign education providers to meet that demand. In Lagos state alone there are 12000 private schools.



Bristol Academy Abuja

The most expensive boarding schools in Europe (Source: Geoff Stack of AU Consultants Research for Forbes.com.)

Ah, boarding schools. Cold showers, tasteless food and regimental matrons bent on making students' lives a living hell. Not anymore. In Europe's top boarding schools today, you'll face Jacuzzis and heated swimming pools, five-star gyms and en suite bedrooms, not drafty dormitories and dreary common rooms.

Gone are the days when boarding schools were the places to "toughen" young people up in preparation for remote postings in overseas empires. Still populated by children of the global elite, the schools today are where royals rub shoulders with the offspring of the world's business leaders in sumptuous surroundings. Mommy and Daddy pay through the teeth for the privilege.

In Britain, where the median income in 2006 was 27,940 pounds (\$54595 AUD), basic boarding school fees can reach \$70421 AUD a year, with additional expenses adding another 10%. Yet the sector thrives, with more than 67,000 students from across the world attending, according to a 2007 report by the U.K.'s boarding school sector.

Of course it's more than schmoozing and hot tubs. Small class sizes, vast resources

and intensive drilling sessions get students into the world's top universities.

In Britain, Eton and Harrow are passports into Oxford and Cambridge—an appealing choice for rich parents in a highly competitive world.

“The students take on responsibilities at a young age and get a chance to become an adult in an environment where they are safe,” says Penny Bysshe, director of school guidance consultancy, which helps place international students in many of the top boarding schools. “They learn how to become winners and leaders.”

The 15 most expensive schools in Europe, identified for Forbes.com by Geoff Stack at AU Consultants, are all based in Britain and Switzerland. Only one from Austria, the American International School in Salzburg, landed in the top 30. Switzerland dominates the rankings.

No. 1: Le Rosey, Château de Rosey in Rolle, Switzerland. Dubbed the “school of kings” for the number of royals who have attended, Le Rosey is, at 50,000 euros (\$72,569 AUD) a year, also the world's most expensive international school. Apart from getting a chance to rub shoulders with Rothschilds and Borgheses, there's a lakeside château on 28 acres, 10 tennis courts, a Jacuzzi, a sauna and steam rooms, and a sailing center. The school moves to a separate winter campus between January and March.

College Alpin Beau Soleil, Villars-sur-Ollon, Switzerland, ranks close behind in the tuition race, at 48,000 euros (\$69,666). An international boarding school in the mountains near Geneva, with views of the Rhone Valley, the school features a restaurant on the ski slopes, a performing arts center and a riding center.



College Alpin Beau Soleil

“I think people are partly attracted by the beauty of the country and all the outdoor possibilities it offers, in a safe environment,” Sarah Frei, marketing director of the Swiss school Brillantmont (No. 5 on the list), says of the country. “As we are located in the heart of Europe, students can go on weekend trips to Paris or Rome.”

Eton College, the top-ranked British school, comes in at No. 10 (tuition: 37,500 euros, or \$54,427 AUD). Synonymous in many people's minds with the term “boarding school,” this bastion of Britishness, founded in 1440, remains a school for boys, unlike many former single-sex schools. It has churned out more politicians, royals and celebrities from across the world than any other boarding school, and the large number of students who go on to Oxford and Cambridge sometimes raises eyebrows. Both Prince Harry and William attended, as did the leader of Britain's Conservative Party, David Cameron. Past graduates include economist John Maynard Keynes and

writer George Orwell.

Number 2 in Britain and No. 11 overall: the Charterhouse School in Surrey (tuition: 37,000 euros, or \$54,000). Students of this elite British public school, founded in 1611, are called Carthusians. The school has a strong religious tradition, originally founded on a monastery. The school now accepts girls but sticks to some of its old traditions, including the so-called “calling over” ceremony, in which students are individually chastised or praised in public, depending on their performance over the year.

One reason for the ascendance of Swiss schools is the multinational companies crowding the cities and towns, giving the schools much of their business. They’ve responded to the needs of their globalized clientele by teaching under different education systems, ranging from the American and British systems to the International Baccalaureate.



Charterhouse School

“International education has become a real growth area thanks to globalization. It is becoming increasingly important for employees of multinational corporations to be able to get the best education wherever their jobs take them,” says Robin Brooke-Smith of education consultancy Creative Consulting.

There are other cultural differences between boarding schools in Britain and Switzerland. While in Britain much is made—by the media and by schools themselves—of the boarding school background of such politicians as Tony Blair and David Cameron, the leader of Britain’s Conservative Party, Swiss schools have a reputation for keeping the names of their students secret.

“We are a country used to wealth and discretion, and for a certain kind of person, that low profile is important,” says Frei.