

Challenges associated with operating campuses across Australian States

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Operating campuses in different states of Australia presents a unique set of challenges. It is important for organisations to go into interstate ventures with their 'eyes wide open'. Campus locations need a champion on each site, a well-developed (centralised) student management system (SMS) and learning management system (LMS). In addition, senior leadership must be prepared to travel from site to site providing the support and encouragement needed – in even doses. Despite the challenges – the model can be quite successful in terms of profile and growth.



Education regulations, compliance requirements, and reporting standards

Each state and territory has its own education regulations, compliance requirements, and reporting standards, which can make it complex to maintain consistency across all locations. Navigating these varying frameworks often requires dedicated compliance teams and ongoing training for staff to ensure adherence to local (state) laws.

Despite having a national regulator for Higher Education (TEQSA) the variations across the States can be challenging – but manageable.

Logistics

Logistics is another significant hurdle, as coordinating resources, facilities, and staff across vast distances can be costly and time-consuming. There are also challenges related to recruitment and retention, with regional campuses sometimes struggling to attract qualified staff compared to metropolitan centres.

Culture and communication

Maintaining a unified organisational culture and communication across geographically dispersed campuses requires robust systems and regular engagement to ensure all staff and students feel connected and supported.

Online learning and online communication (hybrid) can help reduce the logistical issues to some extent. Further, communication vehicles (bulletins, newsletters, messages) play a vital role in this domain.

Community expectations, student demographics, and local partnerships

Differences in community expectations, student demographics, and local partnerships must be carefully managed to tailor offerings and ensure relevance in each unique setting. This often means adapting curricula, support services, and marketing strategies to suit the diverse needs of each campus community.

The principle - 'one school – multiple campuses' must be maintained – but some soft tweaking of approach and content would be wise.

There is little doubt in our minds that multiple sites can work and can benefit the institution. All challenges need to be recognised and dealt with in a positive, proactive manner.

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