

**'Glonacal' Contexts: Internationalisation Policy in the
Australian Higher Education Sector and the
Development of Pathway Programs**

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**Maria Fiocco
(BA; B Ed; M Ed)**

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I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

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Maria Fiocco

Abstract

Through a critique of Ball's (1990) policy analysis framework, this dissertation explores the influences that led to the deregulation of international student recruitment ('the policy') and the subsequent development of pathway programs in the Australian higher education sector. In this study Ball's framework is extended to include Marginson and Rhoades' (2002) *glonacal* heuristic to analyse the *global, national and local* contexts that contributed to the creation and implementation of 'the policy'. The development of pathway programs is chosen as one aspect of implementation to allow for an exploration that progresses from a macro to a microanalysis of 'the policy' cycle.

The study examines the key 'players' or individuals who contributed to 'the policy's' creation, the ideologies that influenced these individuals and the contexts within which decisions were made. The research found that *glonacal* influences of neoliberalism, globalisation, internationalisation and commercialisation were paramount in the formation of 'the policy', and in influencing key 'players'. It was also recognized that it was not always possible to definitively describe the role of these 'players' or 'actors' according to a hierarchical structure and separate contexts, confirming Ball's (1990) theory that influence on policy is often ad hoc and trajectory in nature.

Education is an export industry, which contributes an income of \$5.6 billion to the Australian economy. In 2004, there were 151,798 international students in the higher education sector, with 10 Australian universities depending on this industry for 15% to 40% of their total income. The development of pathway programs and universities' close association with private providers has contributed significantly to the overall commercial and internationalisation objectives of these universities. The pathway model, delivered through a private provider, examined in this study is quintessentially Australian, and was a *local* response to the possibilities that 'the policy' created. The model flourished because of Commonwealth and state support, the former providing a national accreditation system in the form of the Australian Qualification Framework ensuring articulation to a university course. From a state perspective, pathway programs and private providers prospered with the support of university partners and successive Western Australian state governments that recognised the commercial gains to be made through co-operative partnerships.

The research concludes that through *glonacal* influences the recruitment of international students to Australian universities developed into an industry that is uniquely Australian. The development of pathway programs and the involvement of private providers was one of its distinguishing characteristics.