

International Student Fact Sheet – Hospitality and Commercial Cookery

Restaurant & Catering Australia (R&CA) has released the following information pertaining to the hospitality industry and its ongoing support for international students.

The facts:

- R&CA is the national association that leads and represents the national interests of restaurants and catering businesses in Australia. The R&CA was formally incorporated in November 1995. The members of R&CA nationally are the State Associations, who represent individual restaurant and catering businesses.
- Students studying cookery account for the equivalent of over 1,000 full time placements into the industry every year.
- R&CA has recently released a statement that there is still a shortage of some 3,000 cooks from the Australian workforce and cooks and hospitality managers are “still heavily in demand”.
- The hospitality industry has the highest rate of job turnover per annum at approximately 24%¹. Very few people stay past the age of 20 in the industry, particularly in the kitchen. It has always had a history of high turnover. But this creates new demand for skilled workers.
- 88.6% of employers within the hospitality sector still found it difficult to find staff even though the unemployment rate had increased within the last year².
- R&CA estimates that approximately 7,900 students are undertaking a Certificate III in Hospitality (Commercial Cookery) in Australia each year. The work requirement for gaining the points for an application for permanent residency for a cook is 900 hours, as part of the qualification. John Hart, CEO of R&CA said that ‘these students are an important part of our workforce – we have a demand for staff in the kitchen that is unmet and overseas students are filling that demand’.
- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) data estimates that the future demand for cooks will be an additional 685 per annum for the five years to 2012/13³.
- The Australian restaurant industry in total employs 784,000 Australians which is 7.25% of the workforce. The industry is still growing (despite economic conditions) and still has significant skill shortages.
- Less than 50% of qualified chefs remain in the industry longer than 8 years⁴.
- One in 10 people leave the hospitality industry within 12 months, resulting in an ongoing need for newly skilled personnel.⁵

¹ Restaurant & Catering Australia Submission To The Inquiry Into Workforce Challenges In The Australian Tourism Sector (2006)

² Restaurant & Catering Australia Benchmarking Report 2008

³ Skills Council

⁴ John Hart – CEO Restaurant & Catering Australia

⁵ John Hart – CEO Restaurant & Catering Australia