



International Centre
of Excellence in
**Tourism and Hospitality
Education (THE-ICE)**

THE-ICE Statement on ‘benchmarking’ vs ‘ranking’

As part of the commitment of [THE-ICE](#) to the ongoing enhancement and improvement of education excellence in the specialised field of tourism, hospitality, events and culinary arts education (TH&E), we have partnered with our strategic partner, *i-graduate* (the International Graduate Insight Group), in conducting THE-ICE ISBSB™ (THE-ICE Student Barometer Survey) annually since 2007. Participation in this student satisfaction research is mandated for all THE-ICE Full-Member and Associate Member Institutions.

As a QA agency, THE-ICE adopt a stance on accreditation/benchmarking that aligns with most QA agency peers and with other QA umbrella networks such as [INQAAHE](#) (the International Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education). We adopt the position that scoring high on a single ranking system does not necessarily equate to high quality education, given the ever-increasing number of global ranking systems (around 70 and growing according to INQAAHE). Broad and unqualified claims made by institutions about ranking outcomes can mislead and serve, at best, as a marketing tool. Full disclosure about the nature and parameters of the respective ranking regime is essential.

We are, however cognisant of the commercial reality that internationally focused institutions are under increasing pressure (internally, from owners and investors and externally, from peer institutions) to make claims about excellence in order to compete effectively in the global student recruitment market. We have no intention of discouraging member Institutions from participating in the various ranking systems. However, and consistent with our partner *i-graduate*, we encourage our members to tread cautiously on their referencing. Before making claims public, we encourage network members to give serious consideration to whether such claims comply with the *i-graduate* embargo that was imposed in 2013, and follow *i-graduate*'s press release protocol (please refer to attached THE-ICE ISBSB™ Press Release Guidelines).

If you intend to leverage the positive findings from THE-ICE ISBSB™ Survey in any year/s of your participation, please focus on the satisfaction scores themselves. We suggest that you consider the following:

- **DON'T** – Claim that you are “No. 1 for teaching” - without specifying that this is benchmarked amongst THE-ICE institutions, and the year of your participation
- **DO** – Acknowledge that “92% of our students would actively encourage or encourage their friends to apply for our institution” – “*THE-ICE ISBSB™ Survey 2016 wave for Propensity to Recommend*”

We hope you find the above information relevant and useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us (accreditation@the-ice.org) if we can be of further service.

Pauline Tang
CEO
THE-ICE
May, 2017

ATTACHMENT – Press Release Guidelines



Press Release Guidelines

Please contact your i-graduate account manager to review any drafts prior to publication, and please also check the embargo date and do not publish any materials before this date.

Any publication or quote of the data should include:

- 🌐 The name of the survey (e.g. International Student Barometer or Student Barometer etc.)
- 🌐 The specific wave (e.g. ISB Summer 2012)
- 🌐 The element name (e.g. Visa Advice)

General guidelines when using data in publications/quotes:

- 🌐 The main body of the Student Barometer survey contains questions referring to ‘Importance’ or ‘Satisfaction’ therefore any quote of the data should refer only to ‘importance’ or ‘satisfaction’. Additionally, the ranking sheets benchmark ‘satisfaction’ scores, so any reference to rankings should relate to satisfaction only.
- 🌐 The Student Barometer cannot say whether students are ‘happy’ as the ISB/SB does not use the word ‘happy’ within the benchmarked elements of the questionnaire, therefore it is not a measure of happiness.
- 🌐 Additionally, as respondents are rating importance and satisfaction relevant to them in their institution, any publication cannot imply that respondents got a chance to compare their institution against another e.g. it would be incorrect to state respondents ‘awarded’ an institution 1st place.
- 🌐 Please do not include the overall ISB scores/benchmark group scores. i-graduate remains the sole owner of the benchmark group scores and they are provided to our partner institutions for internal research purposes only.
- 🌐 If your quote includes either the ‘overall’ score or the ‘average’ score then a description of what ‘average’ and ‘overall’ mean should be included in the publication.
- 🌐 If you are unsure of the terminology used in the questionnaire, please contact your account manager.

Example quotes

Do: “University X was ranked 3rd out of X universities in the International Student Barometer Summer Wave 2012 for Visa Advice.”

“97% of students studying at the Faculty of Business were satisfied with Feedback”

Don’t: “43% of students at University X said that they were happy with the accommodation services”

“International students ranked University X 1st in the world for catering”