

Talking Numbers: Practicing Data Conversations That Matter



REGIONAL INSTITUTE
East Asia, Southeast Asia,
& Oceania 2026

Session Summary

We all work with student data (academic scores, course selections and application trends) but rarely take the time to analyse it critically. This interactive session invites participants to practice structured data conversations in a small-group interactive format. Step back, explore patterns, spot trends and discuss what the data reveals. Expect to leave with practical strategies for turning numbers into actionable insights, fostering collaborative discussion and making data work harder in your role.



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How do you use
data?

Why Data? So what?

Reporting

(what happened in the past)

to

Predicting

(what should we do next)

1 Data Collection



2 Data Preparation



3 Data Visualization



4 Data Analysis



5 Data Storytelling



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Why data? So what?

1. Data Collection

IB Results Certificate Collection and University Destination and Decisions Survey

IB Results Certificate Collection and University Destination & Decisions Survey Introduction

1. **Purpose:** This survey allows you to:

- Report all university applications, offers, and decisions you have made in this cycle.
- Indicate whether you have confirmed your university for matriculation (if applicable).
- Provide instructions for your IB Certificate (mailing address or pick-up appointment)

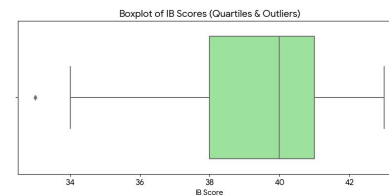
2. Data Preparation

IB/4	IB/4	COUNTRY	UNI	PROGRAMME	School/Faculty
41	39	SGP	National University of Singapore	Architecture	Design and Engineering
33	30	SGP	National University of Singapore	Architecture	Design and Engineering
40	38	SGP	National University of Singapore	Biomedical Engineering	Design and Engineering

3. Data Visualisation

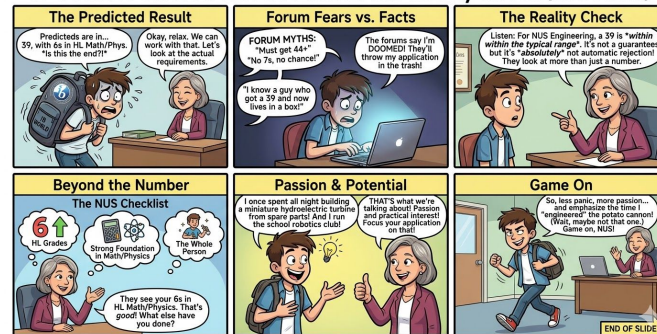
University	National University of Singapore
School/Faculty	Design and Engineering
Decision	Accept
Average IB	39.5
Median IB	39.5
Highest IB	43
Lowest IB	34

4. Data Analysis



5. Data Storytelling

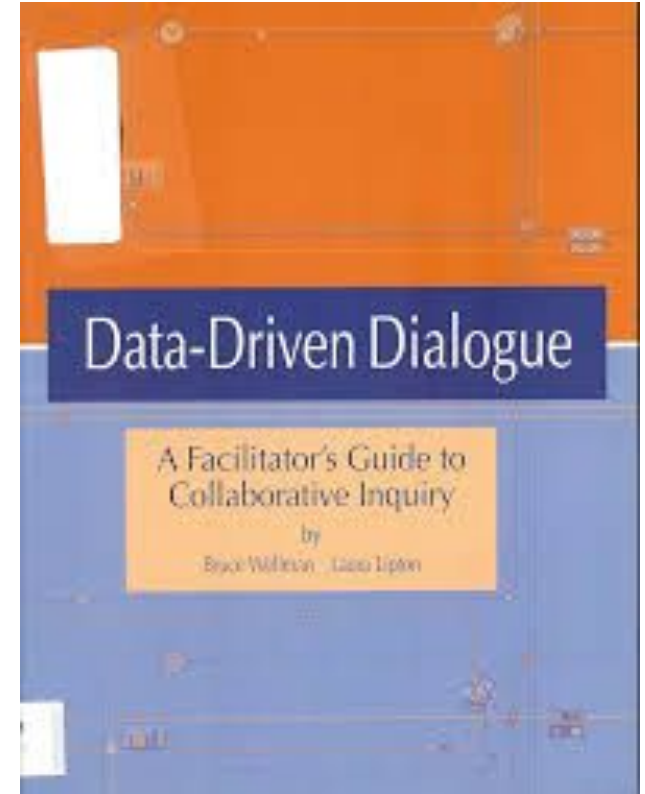
IB SCORES vs. NUS ENGINEERING: The Reality Check (and Panic)



Data Driven Dialogue

Bruce Wellman and Laura Lipton (2004)

A practical toolkit for school leaders in structuring and facilitating collective inquiry with and about data.



Data Driven Dialogue

TOOLS FOR TALKING ABOUT DATA

The language tools described in the following section are vital resources for facilitators and group members. Honing this toolkit is an essential task for individuals and teams as they improve their productivity and their relationships. Facilitators influence group development when they consistently use these tools and model the pattern of pausing, paraphrasing, and inquiring.

Listening to understand

Pausing to provide a space for thinking

Paraphrasing to establish relationships and increase understanding

Inquiring to open thinking and invite the construction of new connections and meanings

Inquiring to focus thinking, clarify ideas, and increase precision of language

Extending thinking by providing resources and information

DDD Protocols

1. Awareness and understanding of own viewpoints, beliefs and assumptions about data, while suspending judgements
2. Provides equal voice
3. Dialogue assists making shared meaning of data and replaces hunches and feelings with facts, patterns, trends rather than symptoms to possible cause.

Data Driven Dialogue (DDD)



DDD Protocols

**PLEASE FORM
GROUPS OF 3-4**

Data Driven Dialogue (DDD)

Phase 1: Predictions

- Surfacing perspectives, beliefs, assumptions, predictions, possibilities, questions, and expectations.

Phase 2: Go Visual

- Re-create the data visually

Phase 3: Observations

- Analyzing the data for patterns, trends, surprises, and new questions that “jump” out.

Phase 4: Inferences

- Generating hypotheses, inferring, explaining, and drawing conclusions. Defining new actions and interactions and the data needed to guide their implementation. Building ownership for decisions.

DDD: Phase 1 - Predictions (The Data)

This data includes demographic and educational trends across seven key countries within International ACAC Region 1. Utilising 2025 government data and population projections, the report includes the youth demographic (under age 18) and tracks student mobility from these nations into three primary global higher education destinations.

Key Countries: Indonesia, Philippines, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, New Zealand and Cambodia

Higher Education Destinations: USA, UK and Australia

DDD: Phase 2 - Go Visual

<https://tinyurl.com/4kan47sb>

DDD: Phase 1 - Predictions

02:00



Consider the following

I assume...

I predict...

I wonder...

My questions/expectations are influenced by...

Some possibilities for learning that this data may present...

DDD: Phase 1 - Predictions

02:00



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DDD: Phase 2 - Go Visual

Participants mark up the data so they better understand it (i.e., highlight trend lines in different colors, do math calculations and chart those, color code parts of the data that relate to each other).

DDD: Phase 2 - Go Visual

Country	Population (2025)	Under Age 18	USA (2025 Open Doors)	UK (2025 HESA)	AUS (2025 DOE)
Indonesia	285,721,236	83,144,879.68	3494	1935	8211
Philippines	116,786,962	39,240,419.23	2521	640	3686
Australia	26,974,026	5,988,233.77	2413	1055	
Malaysia	35,977,838	9,534,127.07	2185	9020	6618
Singapore	5,870,750	904,095.50	1558	5270	4137
New Zealand	5,251,899	1,160,669.68	1042	295	
Cambodia	17,847,982	6,264,641.68	795	285	2017

Table A: Undergraduate (Bachelors) Student Enrollment Across the USA, UK and Australia, including Population and Under Age 18

DDD: Phase 2 - Go Visual

Country	USA (2025 Open Doors)	UK (2025 HESA)	AUS (2025 DOE)
Indonesia	3494	1935	8211
Philippines	2521	640	3686
Australia	2413	1055	
Malaysia	2185	9020	6618
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Table B: Undergraduate (Bachelors) Student Enrollment Across the USA, UK and Australia

DDD: Phase 2 - Go Visual

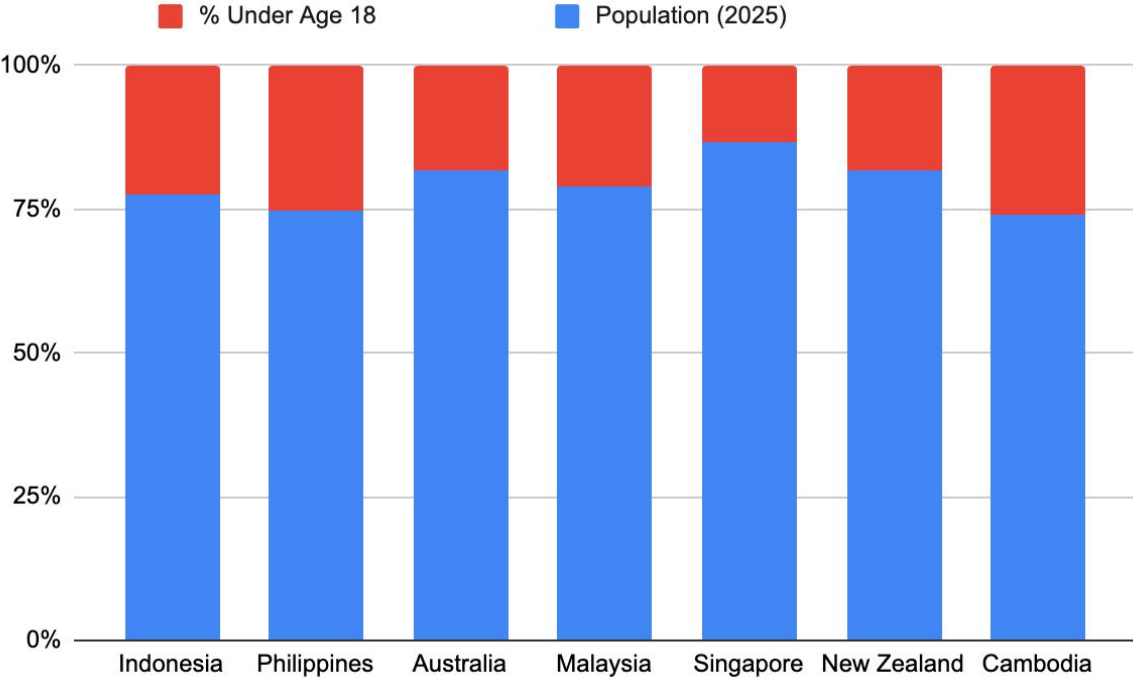


Table C: Population and % of Age Under 18

DDD: Phase 2 - Go Visual

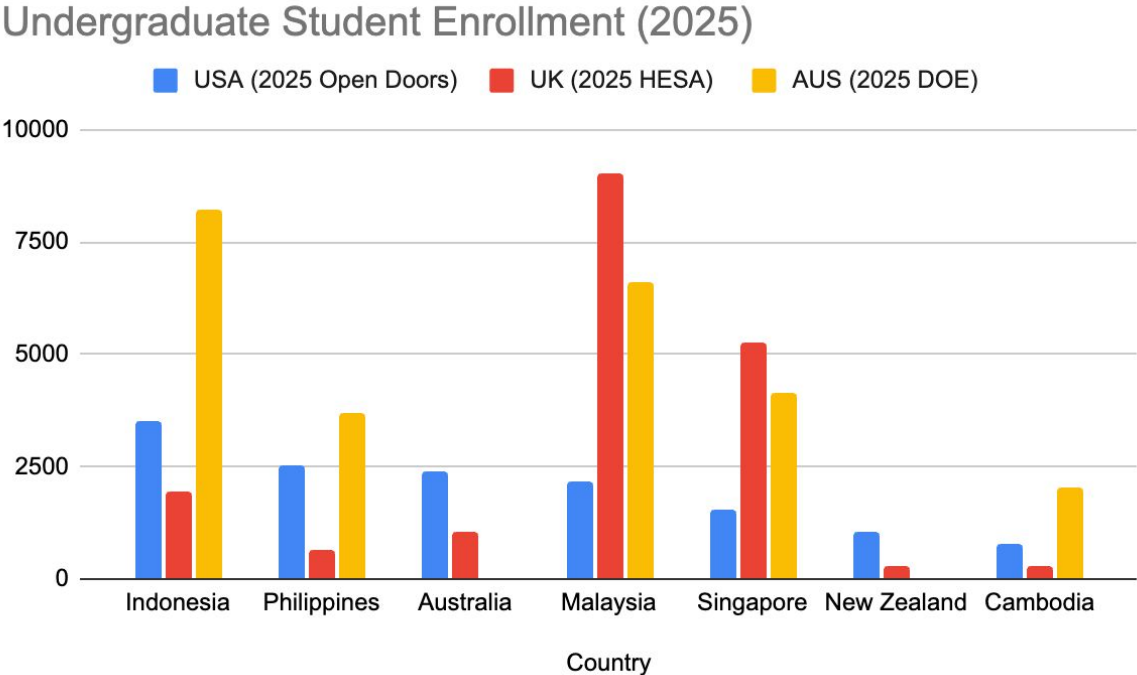
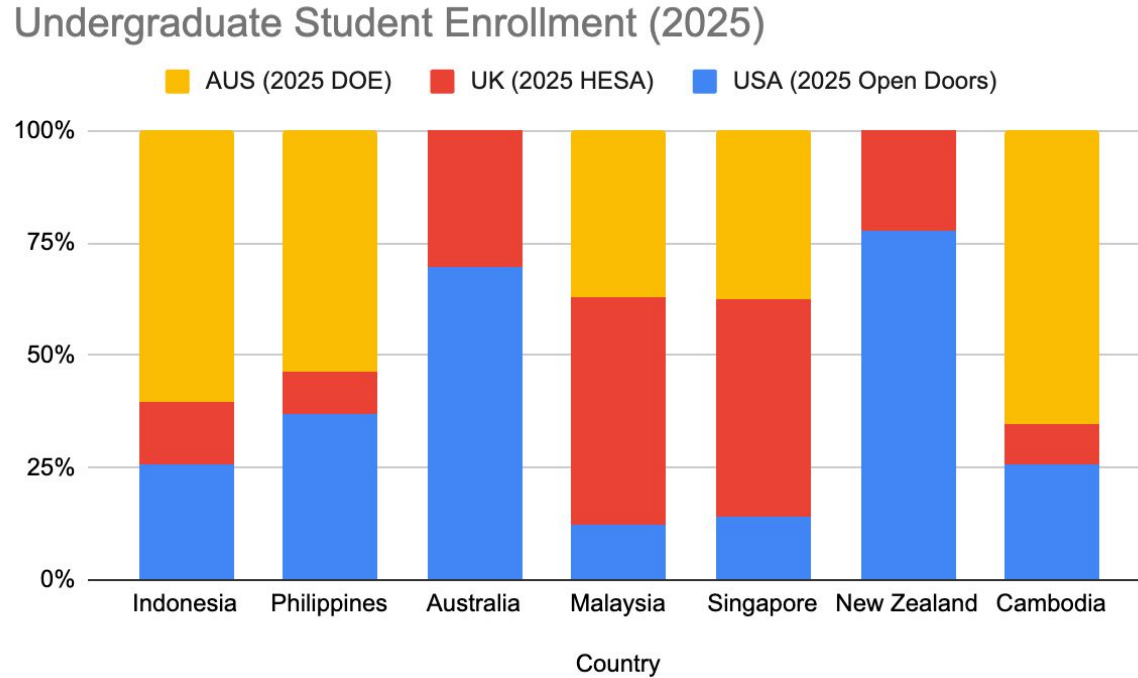


Table D: Column Chart Visualisation of Undergraduate (Bachelors) Student Enrollment Across the USA, UK and Australia

DDD: Phase 2 - Go Visual



E: 100% Stacked Column Chart Visualisation of Undergraduate (Bachelors) Student Enrollment Across the USA, UK and Australia

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DDD: Phase 3 - Observations

05:00



Engage with the actual data and note only the facts that you can observe.

<i>Do make observations</i>	<i>Do not make inferences</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Quantities● Presence of information● Presence of numerical relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Conjectures● Explanations● Conclusions
<p><i>Do use words or statements such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● “I observe that”● “A pattern I noticed is”● “A trend I notice is”● “I can count”● “I am surprised to see”	<p><i>Do not use words or statements such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Because● Therefore● However● “It Seems”
<i>“It’s 52 degrees”</i>	<i>“52 degrees is cold”</i>

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DDD: Phase 4 - Inferences

05:00



1. Generate explanations for your observations
2. Identify additional data to confirm or contradict your explanations
3. Propose solutions or responses
4. Identify data needed to monitor implementation of your solutions/responses.

Some discussion topics to begin with are...

- I believe the data suggests... because...
- Additional data that would help me verify/confirm my explanations is...
- I think the following are appropriate solutions/responses that address the needs implied in the data...
- Additional data that would help guide implementation of the solutions/responses and determine if they are working...

DDD: Phase 4 - Inferences

05:00



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Data Driven Dialogue (Debrief)

1. What new thoughts are you having about the data now as compared to your initial predictions?
2. What are your next steps?
3. How can this impact...
 - a. Recruitment?
 - b. Supporting a student as a counsellor?
 - c. Knowledge of the region?

Data Conversations

What was it like to engage in this process as a data-focused person? As a non-data focused person?

What was different about your own personal reflection vs with a group?

How is this different than how you currently approach data?

How? Could? You engage in this type of conversation regarding data in your context?

How can working/discussing data collaboratively permit you with different results, outcomes, etc. as compared to individually?

Resources

1. Data Driven Dialogue Resources

[Data Driven Dialogue: A Facilitators Guide](#)

[Data Driven Dialogue](#)

[Variation of Data Driven Dialogue](#)

2. Data Driven Dialogue in Practice

[Racial Equity Admissions Data Dialogue](#) (Center for Urban Education (Center for Urban Education, 2017) and the National School Reform Faculty)

3. Alternative Protocols or Methodology

[Coaches Guide to Improving Learning for All Students](#)

[MCW Experiential](#)

[Data Wise](#)

[Five Step Model](#)