



Meeting of the Expert Members of the Council for International Education 1 December 2017

The Expert Members of the Council for International Education met in Canberra on 1 December 2017, with the Hon Phil Honeywood, convener of the Expert Members, chairing the meeting.

In December 2017, the Chair of the Council for International Education, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, Minister for Education and Training, will write to the Prime Minister, the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, providing an annual overview of the international education sector and the work of the Council. On 1 December 2017, Expert Members endorsed a draft of Minister Birmingham's report which recognises Australia's international education sector makes a significant economic, social and cultural contribution to Australia, to our foreign policy interests and individual communities. Hundreds of thousands of international students study in Australia every year, and still more students living overseas benefit from Australia's international education offerings through offshore study. International education supports more than 130,000 Australian jobs and is Australia's third largest export and largest services export, adding \$28 billion to the Australian economy in 2016/17. Expert Members welcomed the release of the *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*, and endorse the importance and recognition it places on Australia's international education sector.

In the meeting, Expert Members also agreed on their priorities and activities for 2018. Expert Members will chiefly focus on, and set out strategies to protect and build on Australia's position as a global leader in international education. Priority areas for action listed in this implementation plan include:

- Providing the best possible student experience, including developing employability skills and regional engagement
- Developing a nationally consistent approach to marketing and branding of international education
- Enhancing international cooperation through in-country projects, research collaboration, two-way mobility and transnational education
- Communicating the benefits of international education to the Australian community

A copy of the [implementation plan](#) can be found here. The report to the Prime Minister will be published in early 2018.

Expert Members discussed Minister Birmingham's possible visit to China in 2018 and have a significant role in informing the purpose and theme of such a visit.

Expert Members also discussed the strengthening of cooperation with Latin America and agreed to work collaboratively with the Council on Australia Latin America Relations to develop a strategic, coordinated whole of government approach to building education, research and training cooperation with Latin America.

Expert members have established two Working Groups to take forward work in two priority areas - Marketing and Collaboration, and Student Services Delivery. These two Working Groups are chaired by Professor Kent

Anderson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Community & Engagement), University of Western Australia, and Mr David Riordan, Director, City of Sydney, respectively.

The inaugural meetings of the two Working Groups were also held on 1 December 2017 (simultaneously). Working Groups had robust discussions and established a clear plan for their work moving into 2018. The [membership list](#) for both groups is here.

The Student Service Delivery Working Group agreed to provide practical advice on strategies that the sector can implement to help reduce workplace exploitation of international students and to increase students' recourse to equity if they have experienced exploitation. The Marketing and Collaboration Working Group agreed to provide advice to, and inform, the reinvigoration of the national brand announced by the Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment as part of the *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*, and consider tools and resources to enhance coordination of destination marketing activities. The next meetings of the Working Groups will be 8 February 2018.

The next meeting of the Expert Members will be on 9 February 2018. Key items for discussion will include:

- the findings of two key recent *Enabling Growth and Innovation Fund* projects, namely a report on student accommodation and also on enhancing digital engagement with students;
- the current mobility programs and offerings in the international education sector; and
- the development of a strategy to streamline communication and engagement between Expert Members and the sector.