



COMMUNIQUE COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION MEETING 12 May 2023

On 12 May 2023, the Hon Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education, and Chair of the Council for International Education (Council) and the Hon Clare O’Neil MP, Minister for Home Affairs, together with Co-Conveners of the Council Mr Julian Hill MP and the Hon Phil Honeywood, met with the Expert Members of the Council to discuss Australia’s migration system, the Migration Review, and visa settings for international students.

Minister O’Neil emphasised the importance of international students to the migration system and the Government’s focus on improving the integrity and quality of the visa system. Minister Clare noted that attracting high-performing students to Australia and providing attractive migration pathways will ensure there are highly skilled workers available to help address Australia’s skills needs, and skills needs within the region more broadly. Members also acknowledged the value of international education in supporting Australia to pursue foreign policy objectives, in addition to social and economic interests, and agreed to discuss in more detail at a future meeting.

The Council discussed potential changes to visa settings, the need for improved communication with students considering study in Australia, English language proficiency requirements, opportunities for work-integrated learning, the migration pipeline for international education (from entry to Australia through to post-study), concerns about student employment exploitation and skills shortages.

The Council discussed other issues in international education including the increasing numbers of international students returning to onshore study, post-study work rights and student work hours, online delivery, and student accommodation. As part of a broader discussion of integrity issues, Members emphasised a requirement for greater transparency of education agent activity, and raised the issues of agents promoting unsuitable courses, lack of student awareness of commissioning arrangements and students transferring from higher education to vocational education once in Australia.

Members reiterated greater collaboration between providers, employers and government to facilitate work-integrated learning and placement opportunities for international students will lead to better outcomes. The Council noted that the role of international students in supporting regional development is an area for further discussion.

Future meetings will discuss ways to provide a unique and positive student experience and the role international education plays in delivering on Australia’s foreign policy objectives.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for June 2023.