



Communique

Council for International Education Meeting

16 June 2023

On 16 June 2023, the Co-Conveners of the Council Mr Julian Hill MP and the Hon Phil Honeywood, met with the Expert Members of the Council to discuss the international student experience and the ways in which international students can be provided with a unique and positive Australian experience. The Council also continued discussions on the Government's response to the Migration Review.

The Council discussed a range of issues impacting international student experience including the flow of information (from providers, government and community), international student engagement and employment outcomes for graduates. Members considered student experience data such as that collected by the [Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching \(QILT\)](#) and [Study Australia](#), which consistently find that current and prospective students are focused on post-study work rights, graduate employment, and pathways to residency.

The Council heard from Mr Toshi Kawaguchi, Chair of the Commonwealth, States and Territories International Education Forum, who provided a state perspective on student experience issues and highlighted collaborative work across government and its importance in addressing critical areas for international students, especially around accommodation and community cohesion. Ms Yeganeh Soltanpour, President of the Council for International Students and Expert Member of the Council emphasised the need to ensure safe and affordable living arrangements for international students, particularly in the context of widespread accommodation shortages and rental rate increases across Australia. Members highlighted the importance of mental health and wellbeing on international student experience and discussed work being done to develop resources which support international student engagement.

The Council agreed that there is still work to be done to improve international undergraduate employment rates and noted that the expansion of post-study work rights for certain degrees from 1 July 2023 will likely help to enhance the career outcomes of graduates with qualifications in areas of verified skills shortages.

The Council continued discussions concerning reforms being considered as part of the Government's Migration Strategy. The Council noted the Departments of Education, Home Affairs and Employment and Workplace Relations are working closely with regulators and the sector to support the Migration Strategy Outline in areas such as the role of education agents, education providers, English language proficiency, and employment outcomes. Members noted the importance of international students to migration and considered a holistic view of the system including the role of employers and work integrated learning to support migration reforms. Members were supportive of the direction of the proposed reforms, however noted that further consultation with stakeholders and communicating changes to students will be vital to success.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for August 2023, and will discuss international education's role in delivering on Australia's foreign policy objectives.