

**Discussion questions – Consultation paper for a new [Australian Strategy for International Education 2021-2030](#)
Submissions due [via the portal](#) 12 May 2021.**

1. What are the key priorities for a new Australian Strategy for international education?

Diversity. Our student cohort will develop further and better if exposed to diverse and multicultural and thinking. Australia could invest in stronger partnerships with its Pacific neighbours, to strengthen its relationship and leadership in the region, exploring how to expand and take learnings from initiatives such as the New Colombo Plan.

Diversify recruitment areas and not rely on money coming from 1 or 2 traditional sources, preferably making effort to welcome female and non-binary students on sectors where they are under-represented.

Understanding what it is that makes us 'unique' and playing this up in our communications. There is a lot of references to the appeal of the 'Australian' approach – but not much clarification on what this means. Exploring what those proof points are and aligning them with certain institutions or regions across Australia that match.

2. Students should be at the centre of the new Strategy. How can Australian education providers deliver the best possible student experience both now and in the future?

Being responsive and understanding of the cultural differences, and expectations of specific student cohorts.

Providing unique and appealing opportunities for students that are immersive and provide an experience beyond 'a degree'.

3. What changes are needed to make Australia more globally competitive over the next decade?

- i. Policy and regulatory flexibility are important in enabling providers to innovate. How can we utilise these settings to pursue opportunities, and in what other ways can we work together to ensure Australia remains globally competitive?

Consider the possibility of student loans and flexible payment options for international students. Financial situation tends to be the biggest deterrent for international students to come to Australia, so facilitating payment should be on the table. Other option is to increase the availability of scholarships.

4. How can providers, governments and stakeholders work together to achieve diversification opportunities (for example of disciplines, source countries, study destinations and delivery models)?

Developing targeted campaigns around initiatives (such as the New Colombo Plan, scholarships and incentives) would really benefit diversity. These sorts of opportunities are often hard to find.

Understanding the barriers in specific markets and being agile enough to pivot – such as adjusting application timelines to align with exam periods in priority markets/regions.

Encouraging and incentivising priority markets through mutually beneficial arrangements.

Creating pathways that make the most of existing strengths in certain fields of study (such as partnering with top 10 globally ranked institutions in certain discipline areas as a pathway to other programs).

5. What are the necessary skills for the future that students should be prepared for?

- i. How can Australia improve employability outcomes for international students, ensuring they have the necessary skills to compete in a globally competitive labour market?

Really identifying what the 'Australian education' experience point of difference is, and aligning this with our core strengths. Promoting the journey via alumni voices – with a focus on a diversity of stories and experiences, and the outcome that they benefited from. This also may assist in developing a narrative around what is 'unique' about the Australian education experience.

Providing employment training and support to students via 'employability' teams and functions. Encouraging internships opportunities and supporting this via funding through small business incentives.

6. How do we create a uniquely Australian education experience?

- i. What is our value proposition for both international and domestic students?
- ii. How do we offer an Australian education experience while complementing the value of Australian offshore and online education?

By understanding what we mean when we say 'uniquely Australian' – provide the proof points.

Focusing on multicultural aspects, and understanding what the drivers for specific markets and regions are. Finding what commonality exists within these drivers.

Also understanding the difference between nationalistic positioning, and telling a story about what it means to have an experience that is different.

The value of offshore and online really needs further consideration. It would be good to understand who does this well, identify some champion pilot opportunities and learn from this. Understanding the impact of an 'online' focus. How can we truly translate what it means to be in a place and experience a culture, into a virtual reality?

7. Community support for the international education sector is important for the sector's social licence. How can the benefits this sector provides to Australia be better understood by wider community?

Consider a domestic campaign promoting the importance of international education for the country. The jobs it creates, and how much it contributes to Australian society. The more on-board Australians are with the idea of welcoming students, the more those students will love coming here.

8. What else should the Council for International Education and the Australian Government consider in developing the new Strategy?

Really considering the discipline areas (and corresponding outputs and industries) where we excel, and where we want to excel. Focusing on those areas that we can develop to create a mass of expertise that we can be known for. Innovation, and entrepreneurship is an opportunity that closely aligns with the 'Australian' psyche of a 'can do' attitude and 'giving it a go'.