

Q20.

Australian Strategy for International Education consultation submission

Privacy Personal information

Your personal information is protected by law, including under the *Privacy Act 1988* (Privacy Act). Personal information is information or an opinion about an identifiable individual. Personal information includes an individual's name and contact details.

Purpose of collecting your information

We will use the information you have provided to handle your enquiry.

We may need to collect further information from you in order to handle your enquiry. If you do not provide this information to the department, it may affect how we handle your enquiry. In some circumstances, it may mean we are not able to handle your enquiry.

Disclosure of your personal information

Your personal information may be disclosed to other parties where it is necessary to handle your enquiry, where you have agreed, or where it is otherwise permitted under the Privacy Act.

Privacy policy

The department's Privacy Policy, including information about how to make a complaint and access to and correction of your personal information, can be found at <https://www.dese.gov.au/privacy> or by requesting a copy from the department at privacy@dese.gov.au. To contact the department about your personal information email privacy@dese.gov.au.

Q1. Name *

Q2. Organisation *

Q3. Occupation/role at the organisation (if applicable)

Q4. Contact email address *

Q5. Contact phone number

Q6. 1 - What do you see as the key priorities for a new Australian strategy for international education? [limit to 500 words]

The real heroes of our international student export industry are those institutions that have established overseas campuses in the countries of origin of international students. Examples of such institutions include RMIT (Vietnam), Charles Sturt University (Canada), and James Cook University (Singapore). These universities have taken the extraordinary step to establish operations in foreign countries and represent the true spirit of Australian export education. The key priority for a new Australian strategy for international education is to establish a blueprint for other Australian universities to do the same.

Q7. 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? [limit to 500 words]

Australian education providers are largely funded by Australian tax payers. The primary responsibility of Australian education providers is to provide educational opportunities to Australian citizens, permanent residents, refugees, and other persons granted unfettered access to our education system. These students should be THE CENTRE of any new strategy. Australian education providers must ensure that international students admitted to an institution of higher learning have adequate English language skills to function effectively in an Australian classroom environment. The current minimum IELTS band should be raised to 7.5 for all courses at the bachelor level and above for all international students. This is vital to ensure that the quality of education provided to domestic students is not compromised by course delivery conditions that are constrained by the limited fluency of some international students. This will also benefit international students who meet these conditions, as they will be better equipped to integrate into classroom learning environments with their domestic peers.

Q8. 3 - What changes are needed to make Australia more globally competitive over the next decade? [limit to 500 words]

Universities need to stop their reliance on favourable visa conditions for international students and invest more time and effort into enhancing the intrinsic value of an Australian education.

Q22. 3.1 - 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? [limit to 500 words]

The regulatory framework that exists to manage the entry and residence of foreign nationals must not be changed. There is no case to grant permanent residency to an international student who has promised the Commonwealth in their visa application that they will return to their country of origin at the end of their studies. International students who have successfully completed their Australian courses should be encouraged to reapply for migration to Australia from their countries of origin. This prevents misuse of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal by permanent residency applicants who have little prospect of succeeding in their applications. This will help to secure more support from the Australian community.

Q21.
4 - How can providers, governments and stakeholders work together to achieve diversification opportunities (for example of disciplines, source countries, study destinations and delivery models)? [limit to 500 words]

Encourage Australian universities to establish offshore campuses in emerging markets. For example, the Gulf states, Central Asia, and our near neighbours in the Pacific.

Q9.
5 - What are the necessary skills for the future that students should be prepared for? [limit to 500 words]

A solid grasp of English at an IELTS level of 7.5 or higher.

Q10.

5.1 - How can Australia improve employability outcomes for international students, ensuring students have the necessary the skills to compete in a globally competitive labour market? [limit to 500 words]

In our post-COVID environment employment opportunities in Australia MUST be prioritised for Australian citizens, permanent residents, and other persons granted unfettered access to our labour market. The emphasis on skill formation for international students should be in the context of exploiting job opportunities in the student's country of origin. For example, course work could require the international students to work on a project from their home country. This approach has the important advantage of establishing and/or enhancing relationships between the international student and employers in the country of origin while at the same time enhancing Australia's brand-image in that country.

Q11.

6 - How do we create a uniquely Australian education experience? [limit to 500 words]

It is difficult to create a uniquely Australian experience when the majority of students in a class come from the same country. This is a complaint not only of international students, but also in some instances of domestic students as well. The reality is that some Australian universities are oversubscribed with international students who want to attend a particular institution. A more aggressive marketing campaign from less popular institutions may alleviate this. However, the Council for International Education needs to be mindful of domestic student needs and the opinions of the tax paying Australian community. Their support is crucial.

Q12.

6.1 - What is our value proposition for both international and domestic students? [limit to 500 words]

International students: We provide a quality Australian education by leveraging the experiences of our diverse international student-base. Domestic Students: Commencing an educational journey with us will provides a pathway to a world of opportunities.

Q13.

6.2 - How do we offer an Australian education experience while complementing the value of Australian offshore and online education? [limit to 500 words]

An interesting model to adopt here could be a blended learning approach that incorporates compulsory residential workshops into an online delivery structure. This could permit an international student to start a course offshore and partake of the Australian experience via in-country workshops. This approach also streamlines visa arrangements as only short term stays in Australia would be necessary.

Q14.

7 - What else should the Council for International Education and the Australian Government consider in developing a new strategy? [limit to 500 words]

Community support for international students has diminished since COVID-19. There may be numerous reasons for this including a perceived decline in academic standards due to low levels of English literacy, the granting of access to the Australian labour market without the necessity to apply for a work permit, and the provision of post graduate visas. Allowing foreign nationals to obtain entry level jobs also has a negative impact on the capacity for Australian youth to get a foothold in the labour market. As Australians emerge from the support that job keeper provided, allowing international students to work in this post-COVID environment may not be well received by Australian residents. The Council for International Education could do more to convince the Australian populace that selected international students are temporary residents, and that their presence here provides opportunities for Australian students to study abroad. The Council for International Education needs to invest more time and effort into establishing more exchange programs with foreign countries for our young citizens.

Q15.

8 - Do you have any additional comments or feedback to share?

The council for international education needs to provide more transparency in how the quantification of the benefits of international students in Australia is calculated. For example, in the annual calculation of the value of export income from international education, has the source of the income been fully attributed? For example, income sourced in Australia by international students to pay for university fees can hardly be called an export income. The Council for international Education also needs to articulate the benefit to ordinary Australians of importing large numbers of international students at a time when the country is experiencing a health crisis and our youth have limited employment options.

Q19.

If you wish to upload a document to support your submission, including a document answering the discussion questions, please upload it here.

Q16.

Do you give the Department of Education, Skills and Employment permission to publish your submission on its website? *

- Yes – publish my submission with my name
- Yes – but keep my name anonymous
- No – don't publish my submission