

Q20.

Australian Strategy for International Education consultation submission

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Q1. Name *

Cheryl Jolliffe

Q2. Organisation *

Bond University

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

Vice President Future Students

Q4. Contact email address *

[REDACTED]

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]

Bond University welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Strategy for International Education 2021-2030 and acknowledges the Government's continuing commitment to a vision and strategy for international education. The University also supports the Council for International Education's view that a new strategy must reaffirm that Australia is open for business and is an effective, trusted global partner of choice in international education, training, and research. International education delivers significant benefits to Australian students, bringing diversity to our educational offerings, supporting global outlooks within the curriculum, and enabling networks and relationships that span the globe. Further, international education contributes to our broader economy and helps build Australia's future talent pool. A new strategy should recognise and support the heterogeneous and multi-sectoral nature of Australia's international education offering. It should recognise the long-term benefits of on-shore international education and build on prior success to ensure Australia remains a high-quality and highly-sought academic experience within the global landscape. A clear plan for the safe return of international students to Australia must be a key priority of the strategy in the short-term, combined with a longer-term vision for recovery and growth. Australia will need to work hard to restore the trust and confidence of international students and to rebuild our reputation as a destination of opportunity, aspiration and choice. Policies and messaging to international students in competitor markets has been far more welcoming than Australia's. Australia will need to as a key priority:

- Communicate positively with international students and their families.
- Provide certainty around entry to Australia to both complete and commence studies.
- Assurances that students will receive support whilst studying onshore in times of public health emergencies.
- Develop domestic communication strategies to educate Australians about the positive contribution that international students have and continue to make to Australian society.
- Ensure an Australian strategy for International Education works effectively and consistently across all areas of the Commonwealth's responsibilities, and also with state and local governments.

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]

Although the economic and social impacts of COVID-19 will continue to impact global international recruitment for some time, we must not lose sight of the attributes of Australia's international education system that has made Australia a study destination of choice. We need to continue to focus on delivering the best possible student experience. It is important to recognise that students seeking an onshore Australian education experience and those seeking online education experiences are two separate and distinct markets. Onshore students are looking for an immersive cross-cultural experience, whereby they have a campus life adventure, explore a new way of living, build new friendships and global networks, and discover immersive learning experiences. Australia's education sector has a global reputation for high-quality onshore education delivery because our education systems provide more than academic and intellectual development. It is the ability to deliver the complete onshore student experience that has set Australia apart from its competitors in the global market. The preference for an on-campus experience is supported by a recent IDP international student survey which revealed that only 7% of international students who want to study at Australian Universities are willing to do so purely online. Domestic students also have a preference for face-to-face teaching as evidenced by the 2020 Student Experience Survey - COVID module which shows 67% of domestic undergraduate university students have a preference for studying face-to-face on campus. For prospective students seeking an online education, the learning experience is a priority above the complete immersive and personal student experience. The strategy actions should make clear distinctions between the two types of student demand. International education enhances the Australian student experience by exposure to diverse cultures and ideas, and develops cross-cultural competencies. This should be clearly messaged in the strategy and furthered through programs that support Australians to study abroad. Students were at the centre of the strengthening and fundamental actions in the 2020 strategy, and a continued focus on the student experience is even more important for the new 2021-2030 strategy.

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

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]

Regional Policies One of the challenges for the sector is how to inform international students of the availability of high-quality education, meaningful employment opportunities, and community engagement in regional Australia. Australia can offer a diversity of destinations and international education should be promoted outside our main metropolitan cities. Currently there are inconsistent definitions of 'regional Australia' used across the higher education sector and related policies and regulations. This is a source of significant confusion and creates inconsistent outcomes. Policies and decisions, that have the objective of growing international students in the regions, which are defined and targeted using the current classifications systems, take no account of the capacity of regions. A new Strategy for International Education should focus on identifying those regions that can deliver a high-quality education experience consistent with the national brand. When appraising regional capacity, characteristics such as infrastructure, services, state and local government support, vibrant employer economies, and opportunities to leverage the synergies between industry and education should be considered. International Student Visas Policies International students can contribute to Australia's talent and knowledge base, and long-term economic success. By recognising that some students will wish to immigrate to Australia, the Government should provide a simplified and clear graduate path to permanent residency for those who desire it, that is consistent with our national population targets. Further, it is important to recognise the diversity of Australia's education sector and ensure continued support for shorter-term students such as study abroad and non-award students who typically bring a more diverse nationality mix to Australian schools and campuses. Ensuring that visa settings support onshore study for all sectors, including those which build the pipeline such as ELICOS and VET, is critical.

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]

Achieving diversity, innovating delivery models, and competing in a global environment requires investment. Over the years, universities have pursued all avenues including Trans-National Education (TNE), online education, and other innovative models - with some success and many lessons learnt. Some universities are positioned to invest at scale and accept risk exposure, while others are not. Potential diversification opportunities may benefit from government led arrangements and investments that support entry for all education sectors, establishing an equal playing field for access. Trans-National Education There have been successful TNE models over the history of Australia's global engagement and no doubt new models will continue to emerge, however TNE can be high-risk with potential to damage Australia's reputation for high-quality education. Establishment costs can be extremely high, and returns are often non-financial such as enhanced institutional brand or deepening partnerships. A greater understanding is required on how TNE opportunities can be leveraged across the sectors (ELICOS, schools, VET, Higher Education) and the diverse range of public and private education providers. There are also significant barriers to entry in developing TNE into major markets as there is an increasing desire of many countries or markets, particularly in East and Southeast Asia, to provide their own tertiary education in-country, which will inevitably impact opportunities for expanding Australian TNE* * Melbourne Centre for the Study of Higher Education: Australia's higher education delivery offshore and online-trends, barriers and opportunities <https://melbourne-cshe.unimelb.edu.au/research/research-programs/international-higher-education/trends,-barriers-and-opportunities-of-australias-higher-education-delivery-offshore> Accessed 05/05/2021

Q9.

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

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]

Q11.

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

Q12.

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

International students choose to study in Australia for the quality of teaching; the reputation of the qualification; personal safety and security; the reputation of Australia's education system (built on a robust quality assurance framework); and reputation of the provider. They desire immersion into an English-speaking environment, and enjoy the benefits offered by the Australian lifestyle. They value the opportunity to work part-time during their studies and, in some cases, the opportunity to live and work in Australia post-study. The new strategy should communicate the value not only to those prospective international students, but also to the importance of internationalisation for Australia's success and prosperity. Advocating the importance of international students and international experiences for our own students should be important to all Australians not just those employed in the education industry.

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]

Q14.

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

One of the key priorities for the new strategy should be to re-assure international students that they bring more than export dollars to Australia. Onshore international students make a significant contribution to every city and regional town where they are based, and they bring a diversity of intellectual views to the classroom as well as economic benefit. A sense of well-being is integral to a high-quality experience for international students, one that is supported by personal safety assurances, secure accommodation, meaningful local community engagement, good health and participation in community decision-making. The various Student Welfare Hubs that have been created in many cities and regions should be supported to help build social cohesion between international students and the wider community. Measuring well-being data would improve services and help international students connect with local community social networks. The challenge for the sector is to make a case for international education to a nation that may not appreciate the value of educating overseas students. The sector needs to find better and more creative ways to ensure the broader community benefits from the presence of international students and graduates are communicated and understood. Education providers across the sector and governments at all levels need to message how international students support local business and create opportunities for Australian students by sustaining courses and supporting world class facilities. International education and tourism are Australia's biggest services sectors. Consideration should be given to how the new strategy interconnects with that of the tourism sector. The tourism sector benefits significantly from travel by students and their visiting family, and this relationship could be leveraged to provide edu-travel opportunities for globally mobile students. Better coordination between the government, professional organisations and education providers is required to inform employers of the nature of the 485 visa and promote it as a viable employment option to the broader community and prospective employers. Both inbound and outbound mobilities are integral dimensions of international education. The Government should continue to fund outbound study experiences for Australian students such as the New Colombo Plan scholarships.

Q15.

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

Q19.

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

Q16.

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