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Our Consultation Paper Response

About Connected, Creative, Caring: Australian Strategy for International Education 2021-2030

Our education agency has been counselling and recruiting International students from Europe and South America for the last 20 years. We are based in Sydney with a representation office in France and New Caledonia.

We would like to give you a big thank you to ask our opinion about how to build a solid and stronger image of Australian Education around the world.

Discussion questions

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

- More effective collaborations and consultations between government, education providers from all categories (public or private), educational agents, other stakeholders (Accommodation, Insurance) and International students : so far most decisions have been government-led and it should be industry-led
- Australia should become a destination of choice for Innovation and opportunities: Australia has the power and resources to be a leader in innovation and can give exceptional outcomes for Domestic and International students
- The Australian community should be encouraged to engage more actively with International students so that the latter feel at home: still a large percentage of international students don't feel welcome in Australia due to a mixed public perception that they steal the jobs of Australians or have different cultural values
- There should be some consistency and clarity with Study requirements and Immigration requirements: If International Students are eligible to apply for a Graduate work Visa from 18 months to 2 years , why do the Immigration pathways require minimum 3 years of work experience, even for Occupations in demand? Students should also have access to a clear and consistent pathway that allow students to have option when they graduate
- Improve the branding of Australian Education: beforehand the "Australia Unlimited" logo could be used by all stakeholders (Austrade, Education agents and providers) on all promotional materials and it had a strong appeal overseas; the proposal to use 2 colours in collaterals (Gold and green) does not have as much impact as a united logo

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?



- The wellbeing of international students should not only depend on Australian Education providers but be shared with Educational Agents, Accommodation providers (especially for under 18) and public services (Fair Trading and Police most importantly)
- It is crucial to recognize that each nationality has a different understanding of what support means and which need should be addressed at what time: we need to identify the needs and help providers and stakeholders to use the relevant resources
 - Academic expectations: deliver what has been promised
 - Make new friends: encourage social activities
 - Staff availability: whatever the need, be able to answer to it and relay to the right service

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?
- More flexibility and customisation in the course delivery: use the latest trends in course delivery such as a digital and blended approach
- Support all Education providers to improve their Staff training and Professional Development, otherwise the outcomes will never meet the expectations of International students
- Add compulsory practical components such as industry placements, networking events so that students can improve their professional networking and outcomes
- Identify a niche training in a specific field specific to Australia so that students around the world only want to be trained in Australia in this field (Ex: everybody who aspires to succeed in International Hospitality or Hotel Management will study in Switzerland) : we need to find a domain in which Australia Excel and concentrate heavily in its promotion overseas
- Create a national scheme such as the ECTS or European Credit Transfer Scheme so that all Higher Education Providers adopt the same Academic program nationally: In Australia one academic year can be 80 Credits in one university, 24 credits in another.... As for the marking, some providers adopt the Competent/ non competent format, others the 100% scale.... This is a significant obstacle to map Australian study plans and develop partnerships with overseas institutions

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

- Diversification of programmes can only be possible with a collaborative and proactive input from all parties: how can we lower the cost of new programmes' delivery? Improve the compliance channels?
- Diversifications of source countries can be effectively tackled with the expertise of educational agents and the media channels of the Australian diplomatic missions in the relevant region

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?
- Education providers should all include in their curriculum compulsory industry training or networking events or Job career services or invite professionals to talk to students in order to help students improve their professional experience and networks
- Improve literacy and confidence of speech (Master the art of the Pitch)



- Improve their soft skills: How to define and work on their own weaknesses and strengths
- 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?
- We need to prove that all Australian qualifications are recognized internationally: nowadays most Degrees in Health, Law and Education are not valid overseas and requires complicated conversions; as well as most VET courses. Government and academics should develop stronger ties with the relevant international authorities
 - Australia is famous for its lifestyle, Beach Culture and The Outback, and this is what makes us different: In Europe this is a dream to come down Under. No country has a surf culture as strong as in Australia, such amazing wild landscapes that allows to go on a road trip for months but also enjoying very modern and safe cities; So these physical attractions are part of the package to promote Australian Education
- 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?**
- As mentioned above, the Australian community should be more aware of the contribution International students bring to Australia and be more engaged to mingle with International students:
- Communicate more often about positive outcomes of international students in the main media
 - Invite international students to participate in community events as volunteers or coordinators
- 8. What else should the Council for International Education and the Australian Government consider in developing the new Strategy?**
- Collaborate with and consult the experts in the relevant fields before finalising any decision
 - Monitoring our competitors ' strategies in order to anticipate
 - Organise a Panel for quarterly brain storming sessions including all sectors: ELICOS, VET, Universities, Agents, Accommodation and insurance providers, international students ambassadors

Thanks for the opportunity to share our vision.

Best regards

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