

Q20.

Australian Strategy for International Education consultation submission

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Q1. Name *

Andrew Dawkins

Q2. Organisation *

Camino Global Education

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

Director

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]

International education has played a key role in Australia's society and economy since the inception of the Colombo Plan in the 1950's but most significantly since the Federal government education reforms of 1988. These reforms saw the instigation of a Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) for domestic students and full-fee places for international students at Australian universities. The single decision of allowing Universities to charge fees for international students transformed Australia's engagement in the world and built a world leading public and private international education sector. Key to these changes was the focus on delivering a larger, highly skilled workforce to drive the national economy. The international education sector grew exponentially over subsequent decades, contributing significantly to the national economy. Unlike many other industries and sectors, international education received no major subsidies from the government. It is recognized that a degree of promotional and financial support was provided through sector support bodies such as Austrade. Contributions to Australia from international education include: - Substantial international fee revenue for Australian universities - Enhanced learning and teaching experiences and opportunities for international and domestic students and teachers in Australian universities - Overall contribution to national revenue from spending by students and their families during their study period in Australia - Benefits to Australia from soft diplomacy ties with student source countries - Contribution to skilled migration by international students - Contribution to the economy by students working in Australia both during and post their study period at university. Key priorities: The major driver for international education has not changed significantly since the 1980s reforms. There is an imperative to rebuild the sector as quickly as possible, most importantly for revenue and skilled employment contributions to society and the economy, through students undertaking post-study work, or permanent migration. In the immediate term, a full plan must be developed to support student vaccination and quarantine arrangements for international students so that they can return to Australia in viable numbers as soon as possible. The Australian economy demands strong levels of migration and the government needs to immediately re-start the issuing of study visas, provide enhanced post-study work rights of up to three years following graduation and provide migration opportunities for graduates at the earliest feasible opportunity as a matter of priority.

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]

International students pay full-fees during their study period and bring associated revenue to the economy through housing and tourism. If these students are permitted, or encouraged, to remain in Australia post-study, they will contribute further through their employability. International education is a beneficial mechanism for bringing young, intelligent and entrepreneurial people to Australia, who will contribute significantly to the society and economy in the short and long term. The soft diplomacy benefits of people who study in Australia and subsequently return to work in significant roles in their home countries is also of key importance in an era of increasing geopolitical tension in our region. An inclusive approach during their study experience and then post their graduation will leave students with a strong sense of identity with this nation. An appropriate mix of international and domestic students in class enhances the study experience for all students and for their teachers.

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]

In order to compete with other major destination countries such as Canada and the United Kingdom, Australia needs an enhanced approach to student visas, post-study work rights and migration opportunities. A rebuild and continuation of international student enrolments at similar levels to those reached in 2019, should continue as soon as possible. The cessation of immigration during the COVID crisis has significantly impacted Australian employers across the spectrum. If this is not arrested by resumption of migrants in the near future, it will have an exponential impact on the workforce and the economy over the next five years. Without urgent action on student visas the international education sector may not recover to its previous competitive level with other global destinations.

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]

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]

By enhancing the post-study work rights program which provides them immediate work experience opportunities following graduation and meets critical needs of Australian employers.

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]

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]

Q15.

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

Answer to Q7 (space not allocated above) 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? By developing a promotional campaign that shows the perspective from both students and employers and demonstrates the contribution these skilled people are making to the society and the economy. A tripartite approach between the Business Council of Australia, Tourism Australia and Australian international education peak representatives could advocate and present the valuable contribution of international education to the community.

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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