International Education Strategy for Australia

Submission from
Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET)

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1. Introduction

The Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET) is the peak body for private education and training providers in Australia. Australia’s private education and training sector offers quality, diversity and choice to students from Australia and around the world. ACPET’s core purpose is to enhance and promote the role of private tertiary education in order to achieve educational outcomes of the highest quality for individuals, their employers and communities. ACPET has 1,100 members around Australia representing high quality private higher education, vocational education, schools, foundation studies and English language colleges. Many also have operations off-shore and a growing number have a global presence.

ACPET welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the consultation process on the Discussion Paper for the Development of an International Strategy for Australia and we are delighted to provide this submission on behalf of our members. ACPET believes that getting the policy context right so that Australia’s international education can flourish is a key strategic consideration for government, providers, Australian industry and the wider community. Those of us in the sector are well aware of the economic, social, soft power and cultural benefits of international education. For the international education sector to be sustainable we need to do a better job in engaging with the broader Australian community on these benefits.

Within Australia, the private sector has played an important role in the growth and development of international education as an industry in its own right and currently accounts for half of all international student enrolments in Australia. The private sector has also pioneered a number of innovative approaches to international engagement, including the development of effective pathways programs, foundation programs and recruitment models.

ACPET’s response is focused around the themes identified in the Discussion Paper. Success will require collective action in all thematic areas. The future of international education in Australia will rely on a multi-pronged, multi-sector, multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approach, ideally coordinated by one representative body.

2. A Vision for Australia’s International Education Sector

What have we learnt from our past?

Over the past three years the international education industry has been the subject of a myriad of reviews. The sector and more importantly our clients are change-weary. We recognise the need for continuous improvement but wholesale change, in implementing the International Education Strategy (IES), is not an option. Overall ACPET urges that in delivering on the IES the International Education Advisory Council and Government ensure that:

- they engage effectively with the sector
- policies are fair and equitable
- implementation is well managed and resourced, and
- Australia’s efforts in rebuilding our international education reputation are well communicated to key influencers.

Creating a unified and inspiring vision is important for the sector. Policy changes, backflips, gaps and mistakes have been too common in recent years. Creating a vision that encourages all stakeholders to also contribute is not an easy task. We commend the IEAC on looking to lessons from the past in informing the future. We will take the view from both the recent past and more distant past. From the
recent past (2006-2012) we have seen the importance of:

- raising the bar in the provision of quality education and training experiences
- delivering on the regulatory framework in a consistent and appropriate manner
- managing media messages in a 24/7 media environment
- recognising that we need to meet diverse student needs, manage diverse student motivations and deliver on diverse student outcomes, and
- the unintended impacts of government policy changes.

From the more distant past, including our proud history under the Colombo Plan, we have learned that:

- Australia’s international education grew and prospered because it focused on the region and had a strong altruistic foundation
- quality and diversity of delivery modes have been the hallmark of the Australian experience
- international students were a minority in the classroom and by and large engaged more closely with the Australian community through homestay arrangements and other community-sponsored events.

If there is one overarching theme we must take from the past and from other successful industry-government collaborations the importance of consultation and implementation.

ACPET has consistently advocated for increased consultation by government departments with industry in informing international education and training related policy and is encouraged by recent significant improvements in this sphere. ACPET frequently receives feedback from members on the impact of policy changes on providers at the coal-face. Such information is crucial to support effective continuous improvement across the industry and can best be addressed through a coordinated approach. Equally important is the approach to policy implementation. It is vital that continuous review and consultation is undertaken to ensure policy implementation is timely, responsive and coordinated. The decision to rush to introduction of the Tuition Protection Services scheme has lead to uncertainty about expectations of the sector and is confusing agents and students to the point that they are increasingly vocal about not supporting Australia as a study destination; TPS is turning out to be an unfortunate example of policy implementation. ACPET anticipates that the International Education Strategy will include the provision for consultation to inform any further policy developments and implementation timelines.

What vision do we need to drive the future of international education?
The IEAC vision clearly expresses Australia’s commitment to being a quality and welcoming study destination and a global player in international education. However, ACPET believes a vision statement should include recognition of (international) education’s broader contribution to Australia’s future relevance, prosperity and security. As with any vision statement we need to balance between aspirations and the reality of achieving the vision. This has been an issue in recent times where the promotional arms of government and institutions continue to market a promise and a vision, but the lived experience does not necessarily match this promise. In many cases this mismatch is outside of the classroom and outside the direct purview of educational providers.

Two aspects of the vision are important in this regard, the table below highlights these aspects and our observations. The vision statement could be broadened to include recognition of the value of international education to Australia.
“a country that openly welcomes international students”  
For Australia to truly be a country that welcomes international students we require significant steps forward in community engagement. We recognise similarities in this issue with the concerns that parts of the Australian community appear to have with migration. This is an area that requires significant and coordinated government investment.

“helps them achieve their goals”  
Whilst this component of the vision is positive, it is important to note that students and clients of Australia’s international education sector have varying goals. These goals may not always align with Australian government policy and we need to be mindful of our promises matching expectations.

**Recommendation 1:** ACPET suggests that the vision also include reference to the broader importance of international education and training, with a statement such as “Australia recognises the contribution that international education makes towards the nation’s relevance, prosperity and security”.

**3. ACPET Response to the Key Themes**

**A. Australian education institutions deliver opportunities and outcomes of the highest quality to Australian and international students**

ACPET believes that quality is the hallmark of Australia’s international education. We must continue to ensure that all delivery, public or private, face-to-face or online, within or outside of Australia is of the highest standard. ACPET urges industry counterparts and policy makers to move away from the focus on level of qualification as a proxy for quality. The growth in vocational and para-professional courses is in response to the global jobs market demanding these skills; not just as a pathway to migration.

Australia’s quality frameworks in education are recognised as world’s best practice. As a peak body entrusted with one level of quality assurance for its member organisations, ACPET is active in improving quality through a tightened Code of Ethics, stricter membership criteria and continuous upgrading of knowledge and skills through its National Professional Development Framework.

**Recommendation 2:** The IES must continue to recognise and highlight Australia’s best practice in quality frameworks and our ability to deliver high quality education solutions.

Given the significant international competition for global students and global skills development we know that we cannot stand still. We recognise that action and innovation also need to be taken by providers, not just government. A focus solely on audit and compliance is not conducive to innovation. To remain as a destination of choice we need to support innovation in the field, from a product, programming and delivery perspective.

**Recommendation 3:** Create an Innovation Fund to support the development of new approaches, products, models and programs to ensure that Australia remains as the destination and partner of choice.
One element that contributed to the industry’s perfect storm was the fact that various state regulators failed their regulatory and quality assurance responsibilities which facilitated the emergence, or continuation, of “education and training providers” that were not seriously committed to the nation’s, or other nations’, education and training needs. ACPET welcomes the move to national regulation through both TEQSA and ASQA but also cautions that regulation is only as strong as its implementation.

Recommendation 4: That focus remain on ensuring the implementation of new regulation is effective and uniform across the country and communicated clearly and systematically.

B. A positive and rewarding student experience as a driver for long-term engagement

The student experience has been a focus of government and industry debate. ACPET is pleased to see a focus on student experience as one of the key drivers for long-term engagement. We are all familiar with the importance of “satisfied customers” and their “word of mouth”. We know all too well the impact of negative experiences on individuals and the future flow of students. Providers do not focus on their students’ experiences merely as a marketing approach, we do this because we value the important role that we as education providers play in our students’ lives. This does not change as a result of whether your college is government funded or privately funded.

Visa Processing - the first student experience

Viewing an international student’s learning experience as a journey, it stands to reason that this journey begins in their home country and often it starts when they attend an education exhibition or cross the threshold of an education agent’s doorway. Here is where we create our initial impression and distinguish ourselves as a destination of choice. Those representatives in these offshore settings should be prepared and responsive to student requests and more essentially, they must be fully trained and in possession of accurate information. Pursuing study offshore becomes more problematic with less fluent English levels and once more, students often rely on agents to navigate this portion of the journey.

Next comes the gamut of visa application processes. This segment of the application can be the most tortuous and fraught with potential of misunderstanding and miscommunication, particularly in the recent context of multiple policy changes around student visas. Of concern, our members report that the recently introduced Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE) criterion appears to be resulting in increases in student visa refusals across all sectors. This situation requires close monitoring and amendment where apparently spurious, subjective decisions are being made.

Recommendation 5: That the student visa process be managed more effectively and transparently as a key component of the student experience and that DIAC release reports to industry on the impact of the GTE.

Agent Accreditation

ACPET asserts that one of the missing elements to date in the student visa policy settings is the differential risk posed by the involvement of education agents. ACPET supports the introduction of a formal Agent Accreditation Program that recognises and rewards best practice by a select group of
Australia’s student recruitment agents. This would enable providers to leverage a network of partners who are best placed to ensure that students are genuine temporary entrants and genuine students. Building in a risk management system for agents would reward agents and educational providers who are doing the right thing and benefit genuine students. We draw attention to the New Zealand Government approach whereby accredited agents (through a formal training program) gain access to streamlined visa processing. The important role that PIER Online plays through the Education Agent Training Course (EATC) also needs to be recognised. Making the EATC program compulsory for agents to represent Australian institutions, or at least giving preferential visa processing to agents that have been through this training and the subsequent accreditation process should be investigated.

**Recommendation 6**: That the EATC is made mandatory for agents seeking to represent Australia and linked to this, that we trial an Agent Accreditation Program that recognises and rewards good practice and mitigates poor performance.

**Guaranteed Accommodation**

Ensuring the growth in supporting infrastructure for international students has been a major challenge for the sector, cities and states in recent years. Accommodation shortages, unscrupulous practices of some agents and landlords and at times unacceptable living conditions for international students are issues experienced in all of Australia’s major cities. Housing, a safe place to sleep, study and relax are basic human needs and form a critical part of the student experience. This issue cannot be solved by the sector alone.

ACPET proposes the concept of a National First-Year Accommodation Guarantee secured by providers in partnership with their city council, state government, organisations like the Australian Homestay Network, and the property industry. A best practice example is the guarantee offered by the Australian National University. We recognise this as a stretch goal but believe that this is a fundamental component of the international student experience that remains to be solved.

**Recommendation 7**: That a National First-Year Accommodation Guarantee be offered to all incoming international students based on local partnerships with providers, local and state governments and property industry.

**Extension of Student Visa Rights**

ACPET continues to advocate for an extension of the streamlined visa process to the best of the non-university sector, as well as of the post-study work rights for the VET sector, so that the rights and experiences of applicants and graduates are consistent, no matter the institution of choice. Contrary to the Bradley Review’s intentions, these outcomes of the Knight Review have pitted sectors against each other and allow for discrimination against an entire sector of international students. ACPET on behalf of the private education and training sector asserts that this stance runs contrary to the government’s policy of competitive neutrality. ACPET is buoyed by the confirmation at the recent COAG meeting that the extension of the streamlined visa process to a pilot group of high quality, low risk providers outside the non-university sector will be expedited.

**Recommendation 8**: That streamlined visa processes and post-study work rights are extended to students studying at all high quality, low risk providers as a priority and that the overall streamlined visa process is monitored closely to ensure it is meeting the desired needs of government and industry.
Work Experience

Naturally, a vital motivating factor for pursuing a qualification is the prospect of employment. Providers recognise the value in producing “well prepared graduates” and access to post study work rights for all students as an essential component in preparation. Improved access to relevant and meaningful work opportunities during study is also important. The Student Connect concept in the ACT is a proposed initiative whereby all international students (subject to meeting certain criteria) would be offered a two-week work placement with an ACT organisation each semester. Brisbane City Council is also investigating a similar approach on internships for international students. Programs such as the education to employment (e2e) program deserve further investigation as models of national best practice in supporting student transitions.

Recommendation 9: That strategies to support the transition from education to employment and meaningful employment during studies are implemented by providers, industry partners, and local governments.

The Voice of Students

Ongoing and timely feedback is a critical part of an industry and or an enterprise’s sustainability. ACPET recommends that the IES embeds a national approach to feedback mechanisms that enable international students to have a voice upon which the student experience can be continuously improved. Students’ thoughts are distilled through mechanisms such as the International Student Barometer (ISB) and through agencies such as the Council for International Students Australia (CISA) and the Overseas Students Ombudsman (OSO). This data enables the sector to gain a clear sense of student satisfaction and areas of concern and to employ strategies to further improve the student experience.

Recommendation 10: That CISA, the OSO and student satisfaction studies continue to be supported by the government and industry.

C. Achieving sustainability in international student enrolments

Quality is the cornerstone to sustainability. Measures to continue to improve and monitor quality are therefore critical to achieving sustainable international enrolments. Achieving sustainability in international student enrolments has been an underpinning policy consideration for the sector for some years. The notion of establishing limits or targets on enrolments is not feasible given the industry context and the globalised world in which we are operating.

ACPET understands at the macro-level, and linked to migration policy and Net Overseas Migration (NOM) targets, that there is a limit to the numbers of former international students who can seek permanent residency at the end of their studies. Yet the number of students enrolled with Australian institutions does not need to be subject to such limitations. Given providers and the communities they are operating in have the necessary infrastructure to support international students they should be welcomed.

An industry such as international education that is so inextricably linked to the world cannot, and should not, be bound by caps and limits. That said, being able to better predict and deal with potential issues and growth or declines in markets is critical to future sustainability.
Achieving sustainability relies on improved communication and coordination between local, state and federal governments. ACPET has been heartened by recent improvements in communication between governments and between governments with our industry. The establishment of the IEAC and the DIAC Education Visa Consultative Committee, and COAG’s involvement in international education issues are all significant improvements. There is also a critical lesson we can take from Australia’s tourism industry where there is alignment, open communication and transparent funding for all regions and cities to support the national tourism brand and to grow local initiatives.

**Recommendation 11:** That closer engagement and partnering occur with local governments, including funding support to enable sustainable international education hubs in Australia’s cities and regions.

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**D. Offshore education delivery contributes to Australia’s reputation as a provider of high quality and a partner of choice**

Transnational education (TNE) has been an important part of Australia’s global engagement for decades and is progressively in demand worldwide as technology increasingly facilitates this mode of delivery. ACPET recognises that TNE is a natural part of the evolution of how people are taught and that it can address the skills needs of our regional neighbours. The Knight Review has suggested that providers deal with reductions in the inbound student program by focusing on offshore engagement models, particularly in the VET sector and in Asia. While ACPET members are actively engaged in TNE programs across the globe, we agree with Knight that this mode has further potential and are working with Austrade and AEI to gauge regional demand so that Australia’s VET providers can focus their efforts on best return on investment with lowest risk.

Bringing our programs and training offshore through transnational (TNE) provisions is another means of spreading a quality Australian learning experience beyond our borders. Whilst there is no question that TNE provision of accredited qualifications must undergo the same robust scrutiny as our onshore courses, ACPET remains concerned by the suggested costs regulators may charge for the auditing of programs delivered.

Transitioning delivery models and systems to an offshore context is a costly and high-risk investment strategy for providers. This is an area where the Australian Government can add real value to providers’ ability to select the best partner, design the best-fit program and ensure quality in offshore delivery. Increased government support in due diligence, the updating and development of tools for new models of TNE and small seed grants to support cross border collaboration would make a real and lasting difference in this space.

**Recommendation 12:** That the Strategy include TNE as one of the pillars of education and training export and that the government facilitate the development of a holistic approach to capacity building of the VET sector in offshore education and training development and consider offsetting some of the establishment costs.
E. Positioning Australia as a partner of choice for education and collaboration in the Asian region and beyond

ACPET’s submission to the *Australia in the Asian Century* process identified ten critical issues to ensure sustainable and effective education engagement across Asia. We believe that addressing these areas will be critical to positioning Australia as a part of choice for education and training collaboration in the Asian region and beyond.

1. Continued investment in education for the region
2. Value the role of the private sector
3. Support the development of links between industry and vocational training in the region
4. Recognise education as an instrument of soft power and seek to enhance this
5. Improve Asian literacy
6. Build and enhance regional quality assurance frameworks in the region
7. Support mutual recognition programs in key professions and skills
8. Support the development of a regional multilateral forum for skills providers in the region
9. Support the development of programs and frameworks to grow mutually beneficial transnational education programs in the region
10. Build and maintain strong alumni connections.

*Recommendation 13: That the IEAC consider the extensive comments, submissions and ideas outlined in the submissions to the Australia in the Asian Century paper to inform the future of the industry.*

Foreign Languages in Schools

In ACPET’s *Australia in the Asian Century* submission, we urged the Government to increase access to and participation in (Asian) language programs by Australia’s youth to enhance our engagement with our neighbours. In fact, more than 150 submissions to the Asian Century White Paper highlighted the importance of enhancing Asian language training and an increase in broader cultural literacy / (Asia)-relevant capability in Australia. Improving awareness and understanding of other nations, languages and peoples beyond our shores is a foundation stone to Australia’s ability to effectively participate in our increasingly globalised and borderless world. Exposing our youth to a deeper understanding of their future friends, clients, teachers, colleagues and employers from a young age would go a long way towards fixing many of the issues we face today, including the difficulty of meeting our offshore partners’ expectations of reciprocal staff and student mobility. Ultimately, it would also enable business and government decisions to be made with a greater understanding of, and ability to capitalise on, our place in the region and globally.

*Recommendation 14: That the Australian Government make a long-term commitment to internationalising the nation’s greatest resource and future workforce from the grass-roots through the (re)introduction of compulsory, for-credit, foreign language learning in schools.*

Regional Peak Body

One way in which ACPET is contributing to the positioning of Australia as an education and training powerhouse is through the lead role it is taking in the establishment of an Asia-Pacific regional peak body. This peak body will advance the interests and profile of private tertiary education across the Asia-Pacific as a solution to the region’s issue of skilled labour shortage. The concept builds on existing MOUs ACPET already has with key peak bodies in the region, as well as the relationships formed between the
more than 150 delegates from 14 countries that attended ACPET’s 2011 Asia-Pacific International Education Forum. ACPET anticipates providing secretariat support to the peak body in its first year of operation and to have the new entity in operation in 2013.

F. Preparing Australians for a changing global and economic environment

ACPET believes that there are three key ways to prepare Australians for a changing and global economic environment - the first is to get more Australian students to have an overseas learning or work experience, the second is to extend this global exchange program to those in industry and the wider community and the third is through a concerted and funded national awareness campaign.

More Australian Students Having an International Experience

Outbound mobility and exchange programs have been heavily supported by the Australian Government in the public sector - with Australian universities able to apply for millions of dollars to support mobility and exchange. ACPET commends government on the extension of grant funding to vocational education providers (public and private) to offer short-term exchange and mobility to Australian students at Certificate IV and above through the VET Outbound Mobility Program. Mobility has proven to be an excellent means to promote and build global awareness in Australian students, making them global citizens, and to build stronger and more robust partnerships between institutions.

ACPET notes that any subsidies and grants offered to higher education students in Australia (ie grants and OS HELP loans) should be available equally to students whether they are studying in a public or private institution. This will greatly support the growth of Australian students’ mobility within private higher education institutions.

Recommendation 15: That grants and subsidies for student exchange and mobility, including access to OS HELP, are extended to all education providers in Australia.

More Australians Having an International Experience

Having more Australians undertake an international experience is also important to growing awareness and acceptance. The good work that is undertaken by a range of community groups such as Rotary International and Australian Volunteers International should be supported and celebrated. Further enhancing the funding available to Australia’s bilateral councils to facilitate people to people linkages is important. The Australian Government’s commitment through the Australia Awards and Endeavour Awards is applauded but could be better promoted within the community.

Recommendation 16: That Australian government and partners continue to support people to people exchange programs as a key foundation for building understanding between Australia and the world.

National Awareness Campaign

ACPET believes a reinforced commitment by private education providers working in collaboration with the public sector and government agencies could avail them of a successful marketing awareness campaign centered on the benefits of international education. The trickle down effects for the nation as a whole are enormous and should form the crux of a public education campaign.

Building upon the shared International Student Strategy Australia and IEAA’s Vision 2011 that international education is valued for the benefits it provides to communities and individuals in Australia.
and overseas, it is essential, and would not be that difficult, to demonstrate how international education underpins Australia’s national prosperity and social advancement. The establishment of a formalised system for analysis and dissemination of the import of Australia’s international education industry would disabuse the public of some long-held misunderstandings and prejudices.

Recommendation 17: That a National Awareness Campaign is designed and implemented as part of the International Education Strategy.

G. Strengthening the science and research collaboration of Australian education institutions through international linkages

ACPET recognises the importance of growing and promoting Australia’s science and research collaboration and outcomes. Whilst our members are not research funded or heavily research-active institutions we support the need for programs and initiatives to strengthen these collaborations. Ensuring growth and sustainability in one portion of the sector (ie research) is a prime example of shared opportunities for research students’ dependents, partners and colleagues to also engage with the Australian education sector in some form. We are pleased to see the production of materials to further promote Australia’s science and research capabilities.

H. Australia’s reputation as a provider of high quality education is enhanced through international cooperation and promotion

Representative Body

ACPET recognises the efforts of individual state and territory governments, and of federal ministers and departments such as DFAT, DIAC and DIISRTE, in their commitment to enhancing Australia’s international education sector. What the industry is lacking however, is a cross-ministerial representative body that both recognises international education as an industry in its own right, while also recognising the broader context in which we operate. ACPET would support a stronger role for the IEAC as a council that represents the various sectors and stakeholders with regular access to various ministers.

ACPET would see an expanded IEAC carry out various functions including:

- Driving and monitoring the International Education Strategy, ultimately as an integral part of a national strategy for education and training, and Australia’s enhanced place in the world/the Asian Century
- Providing a direct voice for the industry to various ministers; ensuring coordination amongst the relevant Commonwealth agencies
- Collating and housing data around international student numbers and satisfaction rates, and provider data around quality, financial viability and risk ratings
- Promoting the benefits of international education to Australia – see recommendation 17
- The need for consistency in student services and experience across the states and territories, including nation-wide public transport concessions
- Ensuring a level playing field for all sectors and providers involved in international education including private VET and higher education
- Developing an Australian Alumni Strategy.
**Recommendation 18:** That a high-level agency with cross-ministerial access be established to lead the future of Australia’s international education, training and research. This could be achieved by expanding the role of the IEAC.

**Tool of Soft Power**

To reiterate our position from ACPETs submission to *Australia in the Asian Century* we suggest that Australia’s international education sector must be recognised as a key component of Australia’s soft power arsenal in engaging with the region. In 2008, the then-Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, noted that, “International education’s significance is much broader than economics. It reaches into every sphere of our lives. It is a central part of our international diplomatic efforts and contributes to the development of good relations with our neighbouring countries.”

**Recommendation 19:** That education as a tool of soft power be more fully supported and encouraged though a new interagency body.

**Alumni Engagement**

The importance of international alumni is critical to the future of Australia in the region. With an estimated one million graduates and many cases of Australian alumni in senior positions in government, industry and education throughout Asia, the value of our alumni cannot be underestimated. Despite the world becoming more accessible via technology, the importance of genuine people-to-people linkages remains vital. Research from Victoria University has indicated that 80% of all graduating international students have kept in touch with former students and that business engagement is one of the key reasons to do so. The industry’s representative body recommended above could consider working with the education and training sector to design a whole of industry Australian alumni strategy to support and capitalise on this engagement.

**Recommendation 20:** That the IES develop a National Alumni Framework through consultation with the education and training sector.
4. Summary of Key Recommendations

ACPET urges the International Education Advisory Council to consider the following recommendations for Australia’s International Education Strategy.

1. That the vision also include reference to the broader importance of international education and training, with a statement such as “Australia recognises the contribution that international education makes towards the nation’s relevance, prosperity and security”.

2. The IES must continue to recognise and highlight Australia’s best practice in quality frameworks and our ability to deliver high quality education solutions.

3. Create an Innovation Fund to support the development of new approaches, products, models and programs to ensure that Australia remains as the destination and partner of choice.

4. Focus remain on ensuring the implementation of new regulation is effective and uniform across the country and communicated clearly and systematically.

5. The student visa process is managed more effectively and transparently as a key component of the student experience and that DIAC release reports to industry on the impact of the GTE.

6. The EATC is made mandatory for agents seeking to represent Australia and linked to this, that we trial an Agent Accreditation Program that recognises and rewards good practice and mitigates poor performance.

7. That a National First-Year Accommodation Guarantee be offered to all incoming international students based on local partnerships with providers, local and state governments and property industry.

8. That Student Visa rights are extended to high quality and low risk providers outside the university sector as a priority and that the overall SVP process is monitored closely to ensure it is meeting the desired needs of government and industry.

9. Strategies to support the transition from education to employment and meaningful employment during studies are implemented by providers, industry partners, and local governments.

10. CISA, the OSO and student satisfaction studies continue to be supported by the government and industry.

11. Closer engagement and partnering occur with local governments, including funding support to enable sustainable international education hubs in Australia’s cities and regions.

12. That the IES include TNE as one of the pillars of education and training export and that the government facilitate the development of a holistic approach to capacity building of the VET sector in offshore education and training development and consider offsetting some of the establishment costs.

13. That the IEAC consider the extensive comments, submissions and ideas outlined in the submissions to the Australia in the Asian Century paper to inform the future of the industry.

14. The Australian Government make a long-term commitment to internationalising the nation’s greatest resource and future workforce from the grass-roots through the (re)introduction of compulsory, for-credit, foreign language learning in schools.

15. That grants and subsidies for student exchange and mobility, including access to OS HELP, are extended to all education providers in Australia.

16. That Australian government and partners continue to support people to people exchange programs as a key foundation for building understanding between Australia and the world.

17. A National Awareness Campaign is designed and implemented as part of the International Education Strategy.

18. A high-level agency with cross-ministerial access be established to lead the future of Australia’s international education, training and research. This could be achieved by expanding the role of the IEAC.

19. That education as an tool of soft power be more fully supported and encouraged through the new interagency industry representative body

20. That the IES develop a National Alumni Framework through consultation with the education and training sector.