



Meeting of Expert Members of the Council for International Education 14 March 2019

The Expert Members of the Council for International Education met in Canberra on 14 March 2019, with the meeting convened by the Hon Phil Honeywood. They welcomed recently appointment members, Ms Kathleen Newcombe, CEO of Sarina Russo Group and Professor Heather Cavanagh, Deputy Vice Chancellor - Research and Engagement, Charles Sturt University.

Expert Members discussed development of their advice to Government on [*Growing International Education in Regional Australia*](#) including proposals to support and showcase the broad range of high-quality education courses offered across regional Australia. Specific proposals raised during consultations include an expansion of post-study work visas for students who study in regional locations; scholarships for students to study in regional locations; and strengthened engagement between institutions, governments, businesses and the community, building on the success of study clusters across Australia. Advice will be provided to the Australian Government later this month.

Expert Members also discussed support for student wellbeing and mental health, acknowledging initiatives underway with support from the Enabling Growth and Innovation (EGI) fund. Expert Members acknowledged the value of the Australian Government's legislative protections for students, and noted strategies to support student wellbeing and mental health are best addressed through concrete action undertaken by institutions. Expert Members' views will help inform the Australian Government's response to the Victorian Coroner's report on the apparent suicide of an international student. The report recommended the Department of Education and Training undertake sector consultations to identify strategies to support the mental health of vulnerable international students.

Expert Members discussed the release of the final report of the Migrant Workers' Taskforce and the Australian Government response, which notes work underway by Council to support international students. Expert Members noted addressing exploitation of international students is a joint responsibility, shared between employers, education providers and students, and committed to champion the package of actions to help address workplace exploitation of international students.

Expert Members supported the commitment made by Minister Tehan at AIEC 2018 to publish data on education agents in Australia's education system. They affirmed the importance of enhancing the student experience through greater transparency and monitoring of agent activities, and focussing on the responsibilities of providers in managing their agents. Expert Members shared views to inform the Government's response to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration's recommendations on education agents.

Invited speaker, Professor Peter Noonan, Chair, Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Review Panel, discussed the Review's progress with Expert Members and sought advice on key issues of qualifications recognition from an international perspective. Experts Members noted the AQF's significant role in maintaining

the reputation of Australia's qualifications and in underpinning the student visa framework. Expert Members undertook to provide a submission to the Review.

Expert Members noted work underway to commission research and projects to support the *National Strategy for International Education 2025* through the program Enabling Growth and Innovation. This will continue to focus on the Council's identified priorities of delivering the best possible student experience, supporting diversification and sustainability of international education, deepening sectoral engagement, enhancing international cooperation, research collaboration and transnational education and building the evidence base through data collection.

Expert Members committed to working towards a more diverse and sustainable education sector through the ongoing efforts of the China and India working groups. Expert Members welcomed workshops to discuss key priorities for action with India, and discussions underway on market opportunities and policy issues related to China.

The next meeting of Expert Members is scheduled for May 2019.