

Fourth meeting of the Japan-Australia Education High-Level Policy Dialogue

Joint Statement between Australian Government Department of Education and Training and Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan

In accordance with the *Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Education* between Australia and Japan signed in Tokyo on 12 March 2007, the Australian Government Department of Education and Training and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan conducted the fourth High-Level Policy Dialogue on Education in Canberra on 3 September 2015.

The Policy Dialogue was co-chaired by Mr Kihei MAEKAWA, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan and Ms Anne BALY, Group Manager, International Group, of the Australian Government Department of Education and Training (DET), and was attended by representatives from both governments.

A list of participants is at Attachment A and in addition to MEXT and DET includes representatives of:

- The National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE), Japan
- The Japan Association of National Universities (JANU)

- The Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), Australia
- Universities Australia (UA)
- English Australia (EA)

Senior officials noted the emphasis placed on strengthened education cooperation by the Australian and Japanese Prime Ministers during their respective visits to Japan and Australia in 2014, and the opportunity to build on a long history of high-quality cooperation, and set a new education agenda which would form a key part of the bilateral relationship.

Senior officials also noted the commitment of both countries through the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (JAEPA) to strengthen education cooperation, including through increasing mobility and recognising qualifications.

Senior officials briefed on education policy priorities including higher education, vocational education and training and schools education. Both countries confirmed an interest to strengthen bilateral education ties and to enhance institutional cooperation through regular sharing of information to deepen the understanding of each other's education and training systems.

Senior officials noted the value of strengthening government-to-government dialogue on vocational education and training. Senior officials acknowledged the importance of exploring opportunities for collaboration on skills development in key priority areas including qualifications frameworks, quality assurance and regulation and approaches to industry engagement in training.

The Japanese Government discussed programs to support the internationalisation of higher education in Japan including increased student mobility. The Australian Government provided an update on the development of Australia's first National Strategy for International Education. Both countries reiterated a strong commitment to international education, to increasing two-way mobility between Australia and Japan, and to ensuring the highest possible standards of quality and student care and support.

Senior officials agreed that the introduction of new student mobility programs in 2014, the New Colombo Plan and Tobitate initiatives, provided an opportunity to work together to drive stronger institutional

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partnerships. The New Colombo Plan had led to a significant increase in the number of Australian university students studying and undertaking internships in Japan since its introduction in 2014.

Senior officials noted the successful Australia-Japan higher education symposium and roundtable held in Tokyo in December 2014 and the range of outcomes that had been achieved as a result. Senior officials welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between JANU and UA as a further step in the strengthening of university partnerships through joint activities including increased staff exchange. As part of these stronger partnerships, senior officials noted the development of new forms of joint programs between universities, and the commitment of universities in both countries to provide new opportunities for internships and other forms of work-integrated learning. Senior officials agreed to support a project to share best practice approaches to joint programs with international and industry partners, initially focused on PhD programs.

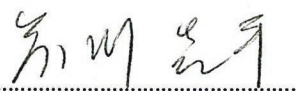
Senior officials noted the May 2014 Memorandum of Cooperation between TEQSA and NIAD-UE. The meeting was provided with an update on the partnership from each country's higher education regulatory agency and senior officials agreed to support further cooperation between Australia's and Japan's quality assurance agencies.

Senior officials reviewed research findings of the MEXT/DET Exchange Officers and reaffirmed the value of the officer exchange programme. Senior officials noted that the long running programme had served to enhance the bilateral relationship, contribute to the development of a constructive partnership between both departments, build awareness of the respective education systems and identify potential areas of cooperation. Both countries noted the further collaboration opportunities identified by the research, and confirmed their support for subsequent officer exchanges to build on this and to focus on shared mutual priorities.

Senior officials shared views on their strategies to promote Japanese and English language education in Australia and Japan. Teacher training and development strategies in each country were discussed and senior officials agreed to explore opportunities to increase cooperation and share best practice. The high level of engagement by students from Japan with Australia's English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) was highlighted.

Senior officials acknowledged the increasing strength of Australia and Japan's engagement on qualifications recognition matters, bilaterally and multilaterally. Senior officials agreed to continue cooperation on qualifications recognition, including through strategic UNESCO recognition convention activities and other initiatives. The renewed Memorandum of Understanding between JANU and UA, which includes clear and positive recognition of respective qualifications between member universities, was welcomed as an important complement to this work. Senior officials agreed to pursue upcoming opportunities that arise from the critical interconnections between qualifications recognition, qualifications frameworks and quality assurance.

It was acknowledged that the Government of Japan will host the next High Level Policy Dialogue meeting in or after 2017 and its date will be coordinated through diplomatic channels.



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Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science
and Technology, Japan



Ms Jessie Borthwick
Deputy Secretary A/g
Australian Government Department of Education
and Training

Participants

Japan

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)

Mr Kihei Maekawa, Deputy Minister
Mr Kiyoshi Saito, Chief Senior Specialist for School Education
Ms Keiko Momii, Director of the Office for Student Exchange
Mr Yoshihide Miwa, First Secretary, Embassy of Japan in Australia
Mr Satoru Yamamoto, Senior Specialist, International Affairs Division

National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation (NIAD-UE)

Dr Akihiko Kawaguchi, Executive Consultant

Japan Association of National Universities (JANU)

Dr Kyosuke Nagata, Vice-President (JANU) and President of Tsukuba-University
Mr Masato Kitani, Director-General

Australia

The Australian Government Department of Education and Training (DET)

Ms Jessie Borthwick, Acting Deputy Secretary
Ms Anne Baly, Group Manager, International Group
Dr Lyndal Groom, Branch Manager, International Strategy Branch
Dr Melissa McEwan, Branch Manager, Skills Engagement Branch
Dr David Atkins, Branch Manager, Curriculum and Learning Branch
Ms Melissa Reardon, Acting Branch Manager, Higher Education Funding Policy and Legislative Branch
Mr Paul Harris, Counsellor (Education and Science), Australian Embassy Tokyo
Ms Maria Fleming, Assistant Director, International Strategy Branch

The Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)

Ms Kate Duff, Assistant Secretary, New Colombo Plan Secretariat Branch

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)

Mr Ben Johnson, Interim Chief Executive Officer

Universities Australia (UA)

Ms Anne-Marie Lansdown, Deputy Chief Executive

English Australia (EA)

Mr Marc Weedon-Newstead, Chair