



Our HR Company

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ESOS Review

Response to ESOS Review Issues Paper

Prepared by Margaret Harrison and Leonie Hemingway

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Introduction

Our HR Company welcomes the opportunity to respond to the ESOS Review Issues Paper into the welfare of International Students. Our submission will respond to two terms of reference:

- *Supporting the interests of students, and*
- *Sustainability of the international education sector*

Supporting the interests of students

Our HR Company is vitally interested in the future of international education in Australia and in particular in respect to the enhancement of the term of reference *Supporting the interests of students* in the review of the ESOS Act. Our interest is in supporting the comfort and well-being of students while in Australia.

We believe knowledge of the Australian culture and the way the society operates, are vital to a student's well-being and standard of living.

Based on our experience and extensive research, we believe that a consistent, concise and relevant approach to providing students with an understanding of Australian customs, behaviours and norms is necessary. This understanding is essential for the well-being, safety and comfort of international students during their stay in our country. It is also fundamental to a positive experience, and when seeking employment during, and where relevant, after their study period.

We propose a series of nine (9) podcasts/webcasts to provide an introduction to Australia, its customs and acceptable public behaviours, how students will be taught and learn in Australia, and how to navigate our society and laws, and be safe.

We believe podcasts/webcasts are the preferred way students seek and retain information. A technological approach, as opposed to traditional methods, will be attractive to students and providers. We recognise some providers expose students to various forms of 'cultural orientation' however, our research has shown students require and want information which is more specifically targeted toward behaviours and expectations. Podcasts/webcasts have the benefit of providing a speedy and secure response to updating material following consultation with appropriate authorities or departments.

Our proposal provides support to students through:

- A consistent delivery of cultural and social orientation,
- Material which can be reviewed and updated as necessary,
- Podcasts/webcasts which are highly accessible to the student population particularly with the increased use of internet enabled mobile devices such as iphones etc.,
- A product which is low cost to the consumer,
- Improved style of delivery by saving costs and time for education providers,
- Knowledge and understanding of the way of life in Australia which will assist our international students today, and ultimately assist our international business interests in the future and,
- Enabling parents to be secure in the knowledge that their children will be safe in this country.

We see cultural and social orientation as a mutual obligation between the student and Australia, which in turn, will differentiate Australia and enhance its reputation as a country of choice for international students when seeking quality higher education and furthermore, enhance relations when doing business with Australia in the future.

Sustainability of the international education sector

xi. *What role should ESOS have in supporting the ongoing sustainability of the international education sector given the challenges it faces into the future?*

ESOS should support the interests of students by ensuring they receive a complete understanding of Australian culture and society, by implementing the recommendations below.

Recommendations

- That the Australian Government support a one-off seed funding of \$250,000¹ to assist with the preparation and taking to market a series of nine (9) podcasts/webcasts. This professional and practical solution will assist students to feel welcome and comfortable when starting their studies;
- That students access cultural and orientation podcasts/webcasts at the Student Visa stage;
- That podcasts/webcasts be part of the student orientation process at the University/TAFE/College of choice;

either/or

- That podcasts/webcasts are accessed by agents prior to the students' departure;
- That parents understand and feel comfortable with the rights and responsibilities of students while in Australia.

General Comments

Our investment to date

Our HR Company has invested considerable time and money in researching and preparing for the development of the proposed podcasts/webcasts.

Our investment to date **\$296,600²**

This amount is in consideration to:

- Consultants' time and travel
- Research assistant (part time)
- New office rent and other on-costs
- Legal fees etc.

Project Development See Appendix 1
Our HR Company See Appendix 2

¹ Detailed financial information will be provided on request.

² Ibid.

Appendix 1

Project Development

- In 2007/08, while providing Management Development training in South and South-East Asia, commenced research into the needs of international students coming to Australia.
- From 2008/09, started one-on-one discussions with the following bodies.

Bodies involved in our research

- Victorian Multicultural Commission
- Australian Federation of International Students (AFIS)
- Consul General of India
- Indian High Commissioner
- UAE
- TDA
- Victoria Police
- Indian International Student Advisory Centre Inc. (IISAC)
- Relevant Members of Parliament

Attachment 2

Our HR Company

Our HR Company is a specialised training company based in Melbourne with clients both nationally and internationally. All training programs are customised for client needs and the company works across a wide variety of industries and local governments. Clients include ANZ, Fosters, Telstra, BT Global Services in Asia, Wynn Macau, MGM Grand Macau, Crown, IOOF, Lanier, CPA, MAV, and many others. Facilitators are all post-graduate qualified and highly experienced.

Margaret Harrison BMus (Hons), MEd, MBA
Managing Director

After a career in academic and corporate life, Margaret Harrison established Our HR Company to provide customised solutions to business and government in the areas of strategic implementation, management/people development, and change management.

Before establishing Our HR Company in 2003, Margaret spent four years at adidas as Director of Human Resources for Australia and Asia Pacific, led the Change Management project at RACV overseeing the merger of RACV and NRMA Insurances, and several years at PwC as Senior Management Consultant in the Change Management Group working with a variety of industries both in Australia and Asia. Prior to corporate life, Margaret was Lecturer and Principal Lecturer at the Australian Catholic University.

Margaret has extensive knowledge of the South-east Asian region having conducted programs in China, Hong Kong, Macau and Malaysia. She is sensitive to people's needs and demonstrates great interest and respect for individuals.

Leonie Hemingway
Consultant to the Project

Leonie Hemingway GAICD JP (formerly Leonie Burke) has dedicated her life to working within all three spheres of Australian government, and the people and businesses with which they interact.

Leonie served as a member and then Mayor of the Prahran City Council, as Chair of Victoria's Local Government Board, two successive terms as a Member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly (Prahran) and as an advisor and Chief of Staff to two Federal Ministers.

Today Leonie focuses more on "behind the scenes" work, sharing her skills in legislation, good governance and business relations, as a consultant and a member of both civic and business boards.