

Appendix B

Submission template

Please note that the Department reserves the right to publish any written submission received in the course of this consultation process. If you consider certain information in your submission should be treated as confidential, or if you wish to remain anonymous please clearly indicate this and provide reasons for the request.

The Australian Government reserves the right to accept or refuse a request to treat information as confidential. Information relating to individuals will be protected under the *Privacy Act 1988*. Requests for access to such information will be dealt with under the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

The template reflects the terms of reference for the review and the issues identified in the issues paper. Please refer to the issues paper and terms of reference for more information. A field for general comments has been included below for you to raise additional issues.

Written submissions are to be received by 30 October 2009 and sent by email to:

esosreview@deewr.gov.au

About you (only the name of the institution or individual providing the submission will be made public):

Student / individual

Name (will be made public unless requested otherwise and agreed): Rohani Mohamad

Institution / organisation: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Course / role: xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Home Country: xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Contact details: xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Supporting the interests of students

1. How can the quality and accessibility of reliable information be improved? What role can ESOS have in ensuring providers and their agents are held to account for supplying prospective and current international students with accurate and timely information?

Comments

I know that my government has a list of **recognised** tertiary education providers in almost every country throughout the world. Hence, any Malaysians who wish to study abroad are advised to see if the univ. or colleges that they are attending is listed (recognised in their home country).

Recommendation/s

So ESOS can liaise with the authority in each country and promote a list of universities/ colleges to help ensure that agents cannot easily manipulate potential students who end up as victims while abroad.

2. How should the Australian Government and the international education sector protect international students if a provider closes? How should this be resourced?

Comments

None

Recommendation/s

I found that the visa application was already strict on allowing intl student to attend 'recognised' institutions. So should it get closed down, similar to banks that went bankrupt, steps should be taken to protect the victims (students, in this case as customers)

3. Are different mechanisms needed to support international students to resolve complaints effectively? Are additional complaint mechanisms needed?

Comments

I do not know that International Students Hotline existed until I read the review report.

Recommendation/s

I think complaint mechanisms only work well when it's appropriately & sufficiently advertised/publicised. It's a good indicator to students who plan to come & study in Australia if they know that such mechanism exists before even coming here. They may feel a sense of security & seriousness in the Australian government to sincerely care for their welfare. It was just not apparent to me that that was the case before I came here.

4. Should an international student's ability to change their education provider be limited, if so in what way?

Comments

No.

Recommendation/s

I sincerely think that one would study/learn in the area that interest him/her/their sponsors... anyway, should things turned out unexpectedly, I don't think the students should be further punished by limiting their options.

Delivering quality as the cornerstone of Australian education

5. How can the intersection between ESOS and the underpinning education quality assurance frameworks be improved

Comments

None

Recommendation/s

6. Where do international students' needs differ to other students, such that additional or different regulation is required?

Comments

Most international students, for example those who come for different societal background such as conformists or those who come from strong extended family support, have certain expectations and challenges, that differ from other students. Understanding and supporting those expectations and challenges are mostly the responsibilities of the education provider. International students are paying higher tuition fee partly to receive such support in addition to quality education provided to other students... the receiving ends (both international & other students) should enjoy similar opportunities upon graduations.

Recommendation/s

1. ESOS, for example, may play an outsider non-biased body that independently assess from time to time if, & to what extent, such effort is carried out by the education providers.

2. This comment is related to working spouses. I thank the immigration dept to allow spouse/dependant to work fulltime, because this tremendously helps buffer the financial challenge that we face as international students that are not eligible for any benefits (e.g., CCB, concessions, etc.). That being said, my partner who works fulltime receiving a handsome salary has to pay tax like citizens, but without receiving any benefits (health, etc.). Can ATO review its tax cut to suitably cater for spouses to international students here?

Effective regulation

7. Is ESOS compliance and enforcement adequate?

Comments

Not sure

Recommendation/s

8. Can risk be better addressed through strengthening registration requirements and/or better targeting of compliance and enforcement action? How else can risk be managed?

Comments

Recommendation/s

How about offering intern positions to international students who finished their study while waiting for their graduation? This may be for only a couple of months but having them on board will provide both you & them better insights of potential risks, as well as each other's rights & responsibilities.

9. What should be the balance between a focus on inputs and prescription versus outcomes?

Comments

Recommendation/s

10. How can ESOS better support Australia's student visa program?

Comments

I greatly welcome the 4 year visa for research based students (e.g., 574).

But, I have an issue on Leave of Absence based on 'compassionate reasons' – where university has the obligation to report and cancel the eCoE / Visa & extending the visa. This however, I heard has recently be changed.

Recommendation/s

The list of 'compassionate reasons' should include other areas such as personal level of stress (assessed by qualified counsellors) & other hurdles, where education providers must make sure that all steps have been taken to understand & support such students (see comments on No. 6). I felt threatened as soon as I was informed about the cancellation of my visa when I asked my uni about going to my home country for a break.

I also recommend that students, especially those with dependants, are provided with easier & cheaper alternative for visa extension (should something goes wrong with his/her research or dependants' schooling, etc...)

Sustainability of the international education sector

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

Comments

What are the challenges that ESOS anticipated?

Recommendation/s

It depends...

General Comments

In addition to receive a certificate from abroad, any international students will gain experiences and impressions, both good and bad, about the country/ies that they studied in. As they became parents (most that I knew and myself), there is a hope and maybe serious plan that they will want their children to study abroad as well. If they had positive impressions, enriching experiences, and excellent education throughout their study time while abroad, they would want their children to study in that country, if not the same university as they did. These impressions include life on & off campus. Examples of negative impression include two-tiered public transportations rates to international students & lack of understanding/support of university staff on international students' needs. A positive impression will be what ESOS is doing right now & facilities provided at uni especially for international students.

I think it is an important investment that any country could have done to secure their positions as 'world class' education providers.