

Question on Notice

No. 19

Asked on 11 February 2014

MR STEWART asked the Minister for Education, Training and Employment (Mr Langbroek)—

QUESTION:

How is the department actively managing its relationship with international students to ensure the longevity of international education as a cornerstone of the state and national economy?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for his question.

International education is a key part of the education and training sector in Queensland and provides cultural, political, academic and economic benefits to our state. It is also important that all international students have their own personal and skills growth while studying in Queensland.

Extensive support services for international students are a priority for the Department of Education, Training and Employment to ensure they achieve full academic potential in a safe and supportive learning environment. These services include:

- international student coordinators and support personnel;
- international homestay coordinators (Education Queensland International (EQI) conducts regular training and meetings with International Student Program (ISP) coordinators and homestay coordinators placed in Queensland state schools);
- comprehensive age and culturally appropriate orientation programs which include information on services available, such as student support, legal, emergency and health services, and facilities and resources across TAFE colleges and Queensland state schools;
- rigorous and regular accreditation by a dedicated officer, ensuring Queensland state schools' compliance with the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students and the *Commonwealth National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007* (the National Code); and
- rigorous and supportive student welfare provided by TAFE Queensland and EQI in line with the requirements of the National Code. This is underpinned by regularly updated policy and procedures targeting safety, academic achievement and student experience.

My Department is continually improving the international student market for Queensland state schools and TAFE colleges by:

- conducting due diligence checks and actively liaising with overseas education agents to promote the high quality programs available at state schools and TAFE colleges, and promoting Queensland as the preferred study destination;
- development of study pathways from the School and English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Student sectors; and
- development of new programs and different marketing strategies and delivery models related to market demand.

The Department also conducts annual international student satisfaction surveys as part of its commitment to maintain and improve excellence in education and training services. The survey results are dispersed to ISP schools and TAFE colleges, highlighting areas of strength and where attention might be required.

In addition, the Department is represented on a number of national and state committees that support the interests of international students, such as:

- Joint Committee on International Education established as the primary forum for governments to engage collaboratively in pursuing common strategic directions in supporting the sustainability of international students in Australia.
- Education Visa Consultative Committee which provides a forum for the Australian Government to engage with key stakeholders to share information and discuss policy matters regarding student visas.
- Queensland's International Education and Training Advisory Council (IETAC) established with the purpose to advise the Queensland Government in developing a new long-term strategy for the international education and training sector.
- Queensland Government Brisbane City Council International Student Accommodation Taskforce which reviews Queensland's existing regulations on accommodation, compliance and international student information needs.
- International Education Association of Australia (IEAA) which strives to empower professionals, engage institutions and enhance Australia's reputation as a provider of world-class education and has a growing membership of almost 2000 members from nearly 200 institutions and organisations around Australia and internationally.

Collectively through these measures my Department is working to ensure that international students are supported so that they can achieve the best educational outcomes while studying in Queensland.