



Council for International Education

Terms of Reference

Role

1. The Council for International Education (the Council) brings together Ministerial and Expert Members from the sector to drive Australia's strategic agenda for international education. Recognising that international education relates to a range of national interests, the Council incorporates education and training, migration, trade and foreign policy perspectives to ensure the full value of the sector can be realised.
2. The Council is a key national consultative mechanism to inform government policy. Expert Members of the Council will advise government on approaches to enhancing Australia's position as a global leader in high-quality education, supporting the sector's integrity and sustainability, and advancing Australia's broader national interests through international education.

Background

3. In 2016, the then Minister for Education and Training, the Hon Simon Birmingham, established the Council to provide strategic direction for Australia's role in international education and training.
4. The Council is underpinned by recognition that the government and the international education sector have shared responsibility for ensuring the sector remains vibrant, competitive and sustainable, assuring quality and excellence at every step of the student journey.
5. The Council supports the implementation of strategies for international education in Australia, alongside Australian foreign policy strategies with international education elements.

Priorities

6. The Council will provide advice to inform the following international education priorities:
 - 6.1 Securing Australia's position as a world-leader in international education, based on a high-quality and diverse sector that attracts global talent.
 - 6.2 Positioning Australia's international education sector for sustainable growth, underpinning its long-term contribution to our institutions, communities and national economy.
 - 6.3 Protecting and enhancing Australia's reputation as a trusted provider of quality education by improving integrity settings.

- 6.4 Leveraging international education to help address both Australia's skills needs and the skills needs of our region and partners.
- 6.5 Enhancing the role of education in delivering on foreign policy objectives.

Membership

- 7. The Council is chaired by the Minister for Education, with the Assistant Minister for International Education as Deputy Chair, and comprises:
 - 7.1 Australian Government Ministers with portfolio responsibilities relating to international education.
 - 7.2 Expert Members with knowledge and expertise in international education.
 - 7.3 Two Expert Members will have the role of Co-convenor.
 - 7.4 Senior representatives from Australian Government departments with responsibilities relating to international education will attend as observers.
- 8. Expert Members, including Co-convenors, have been appointed by the Minister in recognition of their individual knowledge, expertise and networks within the international education, higher education and vocational education sectors.
- 9. In the event that a Member is unable to continue as a Member for the full or remaining period of the appointment, or is otherwise unavailable, replacement appointments may be made by the Minister.

Code of Conduct

- 10. Members are expected to:
 - 10.1 have a genuine interest in the purpose and objectives of the Council
 - 10.2 maintain professionalism
 - 10.3 work constructively and collaboratively
 - 10.4 display integrity, honesty and accountability
 - 10.5 be active contributors.
- 11. Each Member must perform their duties within the Group impartially and without fear or favour. Each Member must be frank and honest in their official dealings with the other Members. Each Member must not use information obtained by them in the course of their duties as a Member to gain, directly or indirectly, a pecuniary or other advantage for themselves or for any other person.
- 12. Members must be conscientious in their use of Commonwealth property and services and must not permit any other person to misuse them. A Member must not allow the pursuit of their private interests to interfere with the proper discharge of their duties as a Member.

Timeframe

- 13. The Council for International Education will be an enduring forum to inform the strategic direction of Australia's international education and training sectors.

Delegations

- 14. Expert Members are not entitled to send a delegate if they are unable to attend.

Meetings

15. The Council will meet quarterly throughout the year.
16. The Chair may initiate out-of-session consideration and meetings whenever necessary.
 - 16.1 Ministerial Members will be invited to attend meetings relevant to their portfolio responsibilities and will have a standing invitation to attend all meetings.
 - 16.2 Expert Members will be invited to attend all meetings.
 - 16.3 There will be an annual full meeting of the Council, to which all Ministerial and Expert Members are invited.
17. Except for the annual full Council meeting, the meeting format will be online where possible.
18. When the Chair or Deputy Chair are not in attendance, the Co-conveners will facilitate the meetings.

Operation of the Group

19. A quorum for a meeting is the attendance of at least half of the Members. The Secretariat will keep a record of the meeting attendance for each meeting. The absence of any Member is not taken to prevent the Group from performing its tasks.
20. Where a Member is unable to attend a Group meeting, they should contact the Secretariat. Observers and guest speakers may attend meetings, subject to the approval of the Co-conveners. Observers and guest speakers will not be eligible to receive remuneration or a travelling allowance to attend.
21. The Group is expected to agree to a work plan that includes a meeting schedule.

Official Business

22. A Member will be deemed to be engaged in official business:
 - 22.1 while attending meetings of the Group; and
 - 22.2 while undertaking a task at the request of the Group, including representing the Group at seminars and forums, or other representations made on behalf of the Group.

Business between meetings

23. The Secretariat must be provided with copies of all incoming correspondence to the Group. The Secretariat will draft responses to all incoming correspondence and provide drafts to the Co-conveners for approval. Once approved by the Co-conveners, the Secretariat will mail out correspondence on behalf of the Group. All outgoing correspondence by way of formal letter must be completed on the Members' letter template and comply with Departmental style guidelines.
24. Correspondence of a procedural or administrative nature will be actioned by the Secretariat on behalf of the Group, while correspondence which addresses strategic issues will be signed by the Co-conveners.

Representation of Group Views

25. In making public statements on behalf of the Expert Members Group, Members must focus on matters within the Group's Terms of Reference. Members must consult with the Secretariat on the content of any such public statement prior to making the statement. The Secretariat may, where considered appropriate, seek the approval of the Minister on such matters prior to such

statements being made. A Member, in such circumstances, must not make the public statement until, and unless, such approval is provided by the Minister.

Expert Member Terms and Conditions

26. Expert Members are not remunerated for time spent on official business. The terms and conditions under which Expert Members are engaged are stated in their Engagement Deed.

Role of the Council for International Education Secretariat

27. The Council is supported by a secretariat within the Australian Government Department of Education.
28. The Secretariat will be responsible for:
- (a) providing support to the Co-conveners and Members as required;
 - (b) liaising with the Co-conveners on official business between meetings; and
 - (c) managing Group meetings, including:
 - (i) developing agendas in consultation with the Co-conveners;
 - (ii) distribution of agendas and meeting papers prior to meetings;
 - (iii) providing a record of attendees;
 - (iv) drafting meeting decisions and action items for dissemination to members;
 - (v) venue and catering arrangements where required;
 - (vi) authorising reimbursement of eligible expenses in accordance with the Engagement Deed;
 - (vii) authorising payment of eligible invoices in accordance with the Engagement Deed; and
 - (viii) publishing the communique as soon as possible after each meeting and circulating the communique to key stakeholders (both internal and external).

Review of the Terms of Reference

29. These Terms of Reference take effect from 6 June 2025 and will be reviewed every 2 years.