

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that international students be provided with personal safety information including reporting requirements, prior to coming to Australia. This should be reinforced at the orientation session provided by the relevant provider.

Recommendation 2

The committee supports public transport concessions for international students. It recommends that the Commonwealth again recommend to the states of Victoria and New South Wales that they introduce such travel concessions for international students.

Recommendation 3

The committee also recommends that all states undertake an audit of the travel concessions given to international students with the aim of standardising them.

Recommendation 4

The committee recommends that education and training providers should be required to provide up to date information on their website regarding accommodation in Australia, including information regarding tenancy rights and responsibilities. This may be via a link to the *Study in Australia* website, however, it may also include more localised information.

Recommendation 5

The committee recommends that DIAC undertake a review of the appropriateness of the 20-hour limit on working hours for international students.

Recommendation 6

The committee recommends that the issue of voluntary work not counting towards employment hours be clarified in material provided by DEEWR.

Recommendation 7

The committee recommends that DIAC undertake a review of the ability to use discretion or a compassionate exemption for students with work rights who breach their visa conditions in relation to work.

Recommendation 8

The committee recommends that:

- **students receive information packs, based upon resources such as the *Study in Australia* website and the Rainbow Guide, in hard copy and preferably in the language of the country of departure at the time their visas are granted. The information packs should include comprehensive information regarding tuition and extra fees; living costs including all relevant expenses such as accommodation and health; employment opportunities; rights conferred by law (including tenancy rights and employment rights); dispute resolution procedures and relevant contact organisations; and support services and amenities.**
- **both the online manual and hard copies should include state-specific information, detailing the various rules, laws and rights applicable in each state and territory.**

Recommendation 9

The committee recommends the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Ombudsman be extended to cover the international education sector.

Recommendation 10

The committee recommends that TEQSA (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency) and the national body to be developed for the VET sector adapt the registration process to develop a comparative information tool on education providers. This information tool should differentiate between the capacity of providers by comparing such things as the level and quality of support services available to students. The information tool would be made available on a relevant website.

Recommendation 11

The committee recommends that, to improve enforcement, the National Code be reviewed by the new national regulatory authorities for higher education and the VET sector, in consultation with stakeholders, to provide clarity and specify details of minimum standards upon which registration would be dependent.

Recommendation 12

The committee recommends that clear and timely mechanisms must be developed by the regulatory authorities and peak bodies to ensure that, if a provider closes, students are informed of their rights and of either getting their money back or transferring to a new course. Students also need to be made aware of the avenues they can use to ask questions or lodge complaints.

Recommendation 13

The committee recommends that in engaging agents overseas, DEEWR ensures that agents and sub-agents are able to access authoritative information regarding studying in Australia.

Recommendation 14

The committee recommends DIAC continue to expand the eVisa system, as an effective tool to encourage professional conduct of overseas agents.

Recommendation 15

The committee recommends that providers deal exclusively with education agents who have successfully completed an appropriate course such as the EATC and that this requirement be phased in over the next three years.

Recommendation 16

The committee recommends that as a matter of urgency the issue of medical internships receive priority in workforce planning and that this be the subject of a special study by Health Workforce Australia.

