

Supplementary submission to:

Inquiry into Australia's Tourism and International Education Sectors

From: Kyle Jardeau (contact details provided) 10 December 2022

This supplementary submission relating to the International Education Sector should be read with my initial submission dated 2 December 2022.

I made enquiries to verify my claims in my initial submission. Some informants took longer than others to report back, so I submitted my 2 December submission without their input. I am now reliably informed of matters I did not mention in my initial submission:

Misusing the student visa as a working visa

I reported previously the complicity between agents and colleges re visa holders who have no intention of studying but instead pay school fees as the price for living and working in Australia. I now understand how flagrant the agents are in perpetuating this misuse of the student visa system.

The code phrase agents use when education providers solicit international students from them is: "Is your course flexible?"

What sounds like a genuine enquiry into whether the course naturally adapts to changing market trends or evolving student needs actually means: "Will you raise any objections if the student never attends class?" If the school answers in the negative they will not receive any students from that agent.

It's not as if the agent will send an 'inflexible' school genuine students and direct students with no intention of studying to 'flexible' providers willing to participate in the scam. Honest education providers, if they still exist, are a commercial risk to dishonest agents since they may report them.

30% agent commission for the life of enrolment

I previously reported how education agents hold all the power. Education providers constantly 'bid up' the commission on student fees agent which are sometimes as high as 30% of fees paid for the life of the enrolment.

I'm now reliably informed that 30% is more or less standard. This level of commission is grossly disproportionate to the service agents offer, some of whom never even meet the intending student.

This absurdly high commission also explains the motivation for education providers to produce such a shoddy product and willingly except the income from students who don't come to class. There's simply not enough fee income left to provide I quality service when 30% of it goes to the agent in return for doing very little work.

Fake live lessons

Since writing my initial report I have been able to verify a deceptive practise by some ESL colleges. They offer students the alternative of face-to-face classroom teaching or lessons delivered online. Naturally a genuine student who has travelled to Australia at considerable expense would not choose online delivery since they could have exercised that option without leaving home.

Only after enrolment do students opting for face-to-face lessons discover the grim truth. They attend a classroom where a teacher is delivering a remote lesson via Zoom. There is a PC on every desk and the students tune in to the remote Zoom lesson. Self-evidently, this is not face-to-face teaching and students are being misled.

The term schools use is 'Hybrid Lesson Delivery' but it is marketed to students as their choice of face-to-face or online lessons. This is misleading and deceptive. It is not face-to-face in the normal understanding of the term, it is face-to-computer and prospective students are not told this until they are already enrolled.

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Thank you for considering this supplementary submission which should be read in conjunction with my original submission dated 2 December 2022.