# SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION. EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE BUDGET ESTIMATES 2009-10

Outcome 3

**DEEWR Question No. EW0366 10** 

Senator Cash asked on 4 June 2009, EEWR Hansard page 52

#### Question

Could you take me through the course that someone has to do to become an education agent?

Could you also take on notice whether self assessment is part of that course and whether that is something that the government is going to be looking at in light of the recent reports that education agents require closer supervision? How is the industry regulated?

#### **Answer**

Could you take me through the course that someone has to do to become an education agent?

The Education Agents Training Course (EATC) is offered to education agents both in Australia and overseas.

The EATC is an online course offered by International Education Services and was developed in consultation with Australian international education peak bodies.

### EATC:

- provides education agents with information about the Australian education system and Australia as a study destination, education quality assurance issues and the Australian visa regulation system;
- keeps agents abreast of changes and developments in the international education services; and
- encourages and supports excellence in business service delivery, study and career pathways and professional development.

The contents of the course cover four topics:

- Australia, the Australian Qualifications Framework and career trends;
- legislation and regulations;
- · working effectively in international education; and
- professional standards and ethics.

Participants who successfully complete the EATC and its formal assessment process achieve two Certificate III level units of competency from the Certificate III in Business Administration (International Education).

Whether self assessment is part of that course and whether that is something that the government is going to be looking at in light of the recent reports that education agents require closer supervision?

Upon successful completion of the formal assessment of the EATC test an education agent will be awarded a Qualified Education Agent Counsellor Certificate and will be listed on the EATC website as a 'Qualified Education Agent Counsellor' at <a href="https://www.pieronline.org/qeac">www.pieronline.org/qeac</a>.

The EATC formal assessment is delivered online at <a href="www.pieronline.org/eatc">www.pieronline.org/eatc</a>. The test, costing AUD\$400, is conducted in English and must be taken at a designated assessment centre in Australia or overseas.

The Australian Government is promoting the EATC in key international education markets through professional development workshops for education agents conducted in May-June 2009. As part of this initiative, the Australian Government is also supporting up to 390 education agents who participated in these workshops to undertake the EATC final examination by covering the cost of the exam.

# How is the industry regulated?

In Australia, the use by education and training providers of Education Agents to recruit international students is governed by the requirements of Standard 4 of the *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007* (The National Code). The National Code is a legally enforceable legislative instrument.

Standard 4 requires Australian education and training providers to take all reasonable measures to use education agents that have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the Australian international education industry and not to use agents who are dishonest or lack integrity. Standard 4 explicitly requires providers not to accept students from, nor to enter into an agreement with, an education agent known or reasonable suspected to engage in dishonest practices.