

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2003-2004 SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 3
Output Group: 3.3 – AEI Group

DEST Question No. E453_04

Senator Carr asked on 5 November 2003

Question:

- a) Can you confirm that the Australian Institute of Commerce and Language has “direct articulation agreements” with:
 - University of Newcastle;
 - University of Ballarat;
 - Central Queensland University; and
 - The Australian Computer Society?
- b) What is meant by an “articulation agreement” with the Australian Computer Society?
- c) If this College has these agreements, can you provide details on where they are referred to on the relevant Universities’ websites?
- d) Is it the case that AICL is “working through” the licensing of bachelor level programs with Edith Cowan University? How far has this progressed? Will this lead, as the College claims, to “co-branding” of courses between the University and this provider?
- e) Will this provider need to be accredited as a higher education provider, under the MCEETYA National Protocols?
- f) What will be the status of the courses it will provide in higher education? Will they be ECU courses, run through a franchise agreement?

Answer:

Australian Institute of Commerce and Language

- a) The Australian Institute of Commerce and Language’s (AICL) has confirmed that it has formal written “articulation agreements” with the universities listed above.
- b) The Australian Computer Society (ACS) is the association for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) professionals. Individuals who satisfactorily complete information or communication technology courses are eligible to apply for membership of the ACS.

The Department holds no information to indicate that AICL claims to hold an “articulation agreement” with ACS. AICL has advised that on 17 December 2001, they sought approval from the ACS to include the following statement in course documentation for AICL’s Diploma level courses:

“Persons who complete the <name of course> are eligible for membership of the Australian Computer Society at the grade of Provisional Associate (AACSProv) on completion of the course and eligible for regrade to Associate (AACS) on the achievement of two years of relevant industry experience in formation technology. Students are eligible to apply for student membership of the Society”.

The ACS granted approval on 22 January 2003. AICL’s website reflects this approval.

c) Each of the universities referred to above provides information on articulation on their websites. However, none of them refers specifically to agreements with AICL.

d) The Recognition Services Directorate of the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) is responsible for managing the registration of all non-university higher education providers and for accrediting higher education courses in accordance with the *NSW Higher Education Act 2001*.

The Recognition Services Directorate has advised that AICL has not contacted them to seek approval to register any higher education courses.

However, Edith Cowan University (ECU) did apply for approval to the Recognition Services Directorate to enter into an arrangement whereby AICL delivers courses on behalf of ECU. DET has advised that ECU is reconsidering its application and that to date, approval has not been granted.

e) The National Protocols are key elements in the national quality assurance framework for Australian higher education. Amongst other things, they deal with the accreditation of higher education courses offered by non self-accrediting institutions. They also call for a legislative framework to be in place, supported by policy and guidelines, to manage and establish a process and criteria for registering education institutions and accrediting courses of study as higher education courses. In New South Wales the *Higher Education Act 2001* aligns the regulation, policy and practice with the National Protocols.

Under their *Higher Education Act 2001*, the Director-General of DET has the power to approve applications for registration and course accreditation from non self-accrediting institutions. The Recognition Services Directorate of DET is responsible for managing the registration of all non-university higher education providers and for accrediting higher education courses in accordance with the *NSW Higher Education Act 2001*.

As a non self-accrediting institution, if AICL wishes to deliver a higher education qualification to overseas students it will be required to make an application to the Recognition Services Directorate.

f) DET has advised that AICL has not applied to register any higher education courses.