

# MINUTES

## Education Visa Consultative Committee (EVCC) Meeting

26 October 2011

Time: 9:30am – 12:30pm

Venue: Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) Offices  
6 Chan St Belconnen ACT

### Attendees

Organisation	Name
Department of Immigration and Citizenship	<b>Kruno Kukoc (Chair)</b> , First Assistant Secretary, Migration and Visa Policy Division <b>Paula Williams</b> , Assistant Secretary, Education and Tourism Branch <b>Penelope Robinson</b> , Director, Student Implementation Taskforce <b>Regina Camara</b> , Director, Student Visa Policy Section <b>Lisa Curtin</b> , Director, Student Policy Projects Section <b>Michael Willard</b> , Director, Points Based Skilled Migration Policy Section <b>Karin Maier</b> , Assistant Director, Points Based Skilled Migration Policy Section <b>Secretariat:</b> Alicia Keers and Sharon Bailey, Student Visa Policy Section
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)	<b>Di Weddell</b> , Branch Manager, International Strategy Branch International Group <b>Kim Cleary</b> , Director Policy Coordination, International Quality Branch <b>Greg Gallagher</b> , a/g Director, Strategic Policy, International Strategy Branch
Austrade	<b>Quentin Stevenson-Perks</b> International Education Group Manager
ACPET - Australian Council of Private Education and Training	<b>Ingeborg Loon</b> , Manager, International Engagement
ACTU - Australian Council of Trade Unions	<b>Terri MacDonald</b> , Policy and Research Officer, National Tertiary Education Union (attended on behalf of EVCC Member: Jeannie Rea)
AGSI - Australian Government Schools International (via teleconference)	<b>Phil Blumberg</b> , Manager International, Department of Education and Training, Northern Territory Government (attended on behalf of EVCC Member: Elizabeth Webber)
BCA - Business Council of Australia	<b>Claire Thomas</b> , Director Policy
CISA - Council of International Students Australia (via teleconference)	<b>Arfa Noor</b> , President
COPHE - Council of Private Higher Education Inc.	<b>Paul O'Halloran</b> , member of COPHE governing body
EA - English Australia	<b>David Matthews</b> , Chair of English Australia (attended on behalf of EVCC Member: Sue Blundell)
IEAA - International Education Association of Australia	<b>Hon. Phil Honeywood</b> , IEAA Executive Director

## MINUTES

Organisation	Name
<b>ISCA - Independent Schools Council of Australia</b>	<b>Caroline Miller</b> , Policy Analyst (attended on behalf of EVCC Member: Mariana Lane)
<b>TDA - TAFE Directors Australia</b>	<b>Peter Holden</b> , Director, International Engagement & Business Development
<b>UA - Universities Australia</b>	<b>Pamela Kinnear</b> , Director, Policy and Analysis (attended on behalf of EVCC Member: Scott Sheppard)
<b>ACT Government</b>	<b>Leanne Cover</b> , Executive Director, Tertiary and International Education, ACT Education and Training Directorate
<b>NSW Government</b>	<b>Robert Goodman</b> , Department of Premier and Cabinet
<b>NT Government</b> (via teleconference)	<b>Phil Blumberg</b> , Manager International, Department of Education and Training, Northern Territory Government
<b>Qld Government</b>	<b>Janelle Chapman</b> , Director, Business Development, Vocational Education and Training Export Office and Marketing Department of Education and Training
<b>SA Government</b>	<b>Heidi Greaves</b> , Quality, Tertiary Education Policy, Science & Research, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science & Technology (DFEEST) (alternate, attended on behalf of EVCC Member: Adrienne Nieuwenhuis)
<b>TAS Government</b> (via teleconference)	<b>Julia Hickey</b> , Department of Premier and Cabinet (attended on behalf of EVCC Member: Anne Ripper)
<b>Vic Government</b> (via teleconference)	<b>Kate Hastings</b> , Director, International Coordination Department of Business and Innovation

## 1. Welcome and Introductions

- Members were welcomed to the meeting. DIAC noted that it hoped that members would find the Committee useful and its importance in sharing information and viewpoints.

## 2. EVCC establishment and operation

- It was noted that the organisation of this meeting had been rushed and in future, members would be asked to nominate agenda items. Any papers or background material would also be circulated to members prior to the meeting.
- The Committee agreed that meetings would be held every two months until the Knight Review recommendations are largely implemented. However, due to the holiday period, the next meeting will be held in mid February 2012.
- The post-study work visa would be added as a standing item on the EVCC agenda until implemented or otherwise agreed.

**Action 1.** Secretariat to schedule meetings for approximately every two months until Knight Review recommendations are largely implemented (with the next meeting in mid February), and to add the post study work visa as a standing item for meetings.

## 3. Implementation of the Australian Government's response to the Knight Review

- Penelope Robinson (DIAC) presented an overview of the Knight Review of the Student Visa Program (the Review) and Government Response. Feedback was welcome on the implementation measures and on communication activities. A range of information products had been placed on the DIAC website and more were to be added shortly. Links to this information would be provided to members as soon as available.
- An overview of the Genuine Temporary Entrant (GTE) criteria was provided. Members discussed the operation of the criteria. DIAC noted that visitor visa applicants are currently assessed against a genuine visitor requirement and further information would be provided to members.
- Data on grant rates was provided in the Student Visa Program Quarterly Reports and this would continue after the introduction of the GTE.
- Members sought information on which components of the Review will be implemented through legislative, regulatory or policy changes, etc.

**Action 2:** Secretariat to circulate links to Review implementation communications including GTE information as soon as available. (*circulated 28 October 2011*)

**Action 3:** Secretariat to circulate a calendar of events and list of recommendations by proposed type of change (i.e. legislative, administrative, etc.) (*circulated 1 December 2011*)

**4. Discussion and feedback on the implementation of the Knight Review measures**

- Michael Willard (DIAC) provided an overview of the post study work visa, including the proposed policy settings to ensure Government has the ability to manage flows of overseas graduates into the Australian labour market in response to changing economic conditions.
- Members discussed potential impacts of the post-study work visa, including whether international students will have access to information and advice about Australia's workplace rights and rules. DIAC confirmed that student visa holders receive information with reference to the Fair Work Ombudsman when granted a visa and added that it will be important for all parties to consider opportunities to provide this information to students.
- There was a further discussion about how any changes to the post study work visa settings may impact students once they are studying in Australia and have access to the post study work rights. DIAC confirmed that Government has agreed to the introduction of a post study work visa with the ability to respond to changing economic conditions. Any changes to visa settings would be made after careful consideration and consultation in instances of prolonged labour market decline.

**Action 4:** Secretariat to circulate a copy of relevant information regarding the post study work visa referred to by Michael Willard in his presentation. (*circulated 28 October 2011*)

**5. New English Language Test Providers**

- Lisa Curtin (DIAC) provided an overview of the new English language tests that will be accepted for student visa purposes, in addition to the IELTS, from 5 November 2011. The additional tests are the:
  - Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL),
  - Pearson Test of English (PTE) Academic, and
  - Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) from Cambridge ESOL.
- After 12 months of operation the tests will be reviewed and their use with other visa programs (including the post study work visa) will be considered.
- Reductions in financial requirements for AL 3 and 4 visa applicants will be implemented on 5 November. Information on this and other measures is available on the Department's website at: <http://www.immi.gov.au/students/pdf/2011-vet-schools-non-award.pdf>
- The AL Framework Review will commence shortly. Information on the AL Framework Review including the Terms of Reference is available on the Department's website at: <http://www.immi.gov.au/students/pdf/tor-assessment-level-review.pdf>

**6. Student Visa Trends and Statistics**

- Regina Camara (DIAC) provided an overview of the Student Visa Program Quarterly Report for the period 1 July to 30 September 2011. The report would be available online in the next day or so and a link would be circulated to members once available.
- The data indicates a positive turn-around in student visa applications.
- Di Weddell (DEEWR) added that Australian Education International (AEI) statistics on enrolments and commencements are released monthly. AEI international student data can be found at: <http://www.aei.gov.au/research/International-Student-Data/Pages/default.aspx>

**ACTION 5:** Secretariat to circulate link to Student Visa Program Quarterly Report once published. *(circulated 26 October 2011)*

**7. Other Business**

- Members discussed the availability of the post-study work visa for students who undertake part of their studies offshore. DIAC noted that this is being considered in the context of the existing Australian Study Requirement.

**8. Next Meeting**

- Members agreed that, due to the holiday period, the next meeting will be held in mid February 2012, and then every two months until the Knight Review recommendations are largely implemented.
- It was agreed that the Secretariat will call for agenda items in the lead up to the next meeting and a full-day meeting will be arranged if members think that would be valuable.

**Action 6:** Secretariat to circulate tentative meeting dates for 2012 once the Parliamentary Sitting Calendar is available. *(Tentative meeting dates distributed with Minutes 8 November 2011).*

## MINUTES

### Summary of Action Items

Action Item	Status
<b>Action 1.</b> Secretariat to schedule meetings for approximately every two months until Knight Review recommendations are largely implemented (with the next meeting in mid February), and to add the post study work visa as a standing item for meetings.	<i>Ongoing</i>
<b>Action 2:</b> Secretariat to circulate links to Review implementation communications including GTE information as soon as available.	<i>Circulated 28 October 2011</i>
<b>Action 3:</b> Secretariat to circulate a calendar of events and list of recommendations by proposed type of change (i.e. legislative, administrative, etc.)	<i>Circulated 1December 2011</i>
<b>Action 4:</b> Secretariat to circulate a copy of relevant information regarding the post study work visa referred to by Michael Willard in his presentation.	<i>Circulated 28 October 2011</i>
<b>Action 5:</b> Secretariat to circulate link to Student Visa Program Quarterly Report once published.	<i>Circulated 26 October 2011</i>
<b>Action 6:</b> Secretariat to circulate tentative meeting dates for 2012 once the Parliamentary Sitting Calendar is available.	<i>Tentative meeting dates circulated with Minutes 8 November 2011.</i>