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Australian International Education 2025

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AIE2025

Background

The potential

International student mobility has become a defining feature of the 21st century. In 2012 at least four million students went abroad to study, up from 2 million in 2000. Not only have Australian education providers benefited from this massive movement of student across borders, communities across the country have been enriched by hosting a cultural diverse group of young people. Australia's people-to-people links have also been deepened with a significant cohort of influential international alumni, particularly in Asia. There is also the contribution international education makes to the Australian economy, with education exports generating $17.6b in revenue in 2014. Demand for education and training globally is expected to increase over the next 10 years. Taking advantage of the opportunities for Australia requires fresh thinking about international education onshore and offshore in order to leverage Australia's competitive strengths and strategic advantages to meet global demand.

Two reports in 2014 identified the international education sector as having high potential to drive Australia's future prosperity and international engagement. McKinsey Australia's Compete to Prosper: Improving Australia's global competitiveness categorises international education as an 'advantaged performer'. Positioning for Prosperity? Catching the next wave from Deloitte highlights international education as one of the 'Fantastic Five' sectors that will drive the next wave of economic growth in Australia post the mining investment boom.

These reports – and others like them – have received a great deal of attention from political and business leaders. Trade and Investment Minister the Hon Andrew Robb AO MP, wrote an opinion piece in The Australian on 25 March 2015 that highlighted this opportunity and set out two key challenges for Australia's international education sector. The Minister asked what would it take over the next decade for Australia to:

- Double the number of onshore international students and study visitors
- Reach millions of people via borderless education, skills and services

The Minister asked Austrade 'to work with the international education sector this year, including with non-traditional players, to develop a long-term market development strategy out to 2025'. In asking Austrade to
steward the co-creation of a bold new 10-year market plan for Australian international education, Minister Robb said that it needs to:

- start by changing mindsets, within the sector and beyond
- have a strong and engaging narrative about the future of the sector
- build on our strengths as well as consider new opportunities for the sector
- be long-term and shared across the sector, emulating *Tourism 2020* and the tourism industry

‘A spectacular opportunity lies before us … the real test is working out ways to make the most of it’  Andrew Robb

Austrade has been working with the education sector and others to develop AIE2025, a market development plan for Australian international education for the next decade. This initiative aims to drive a paradigm shift in Australia’s international education sector. The long term nature of the plan requires not only an expanded definition of what constitutes the sector but also mindset changes to ensure that it realises its potential to be a key contributor to the future prosperity of both Australia and our international partners.

**AIE2025 consultation workshops**

A key stage in the formation of AIE2025 were the consultation workshops held in all Australian capital cities, and Townsville, during April 2015. Over 800 people representing diverse perspectives from within and outside the sector attended these ‘town hall’ style meetings. The key questions covered during the workshops included:

- What could be the vision for this long-term market development plan?
- What are the strategic priorities that would contribute to achieving the overarching vision?
- What mindset changes would be required to drive sustainable growth onshore and the delivery of borderless education, skills and services?

**Nexus between the Draft National Strategy for International Education and AIE2025**

The development of a long-term market development plan for the international education industry (AIE2025) contributes to the work being progressed by the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon Christopher Pyne MP, in developing a National Strategy for International Education. That overarching strategy will support a modern, competitive and sustainable Australian international education sector and promote the internationalisation of Australian education.

The Hon Andrew Robb AO MP hosted two international education roundtables in August and September. These were Minister Robb’s contribution to the conversations that his ministerial colleagues – Minister Pyne and the Assistant Minister for Education and Training, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham – have hosted with stakeholders relevant to their portfolio responsibilities. Minister Pyne has held two roundtables on 18 June 2015 and 13 August 2015 discussing Australian international education at the highest level. Likewise, Minister Birmingham has hosted two Global Skills Training Forums on 19 May 2015 and 28 July 2015 focusing on the profile of vocational education and training in the draft strategy.