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## Media Release

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### **Baird report sets blueprint for quality education of overseas students**

TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) today welcomed the final report of the Baird review into Australia's international education industry.

TDA Acting Chief Executive, Pam Caven said the report provides a comprehensive examination of critical elements of international student education and sets out a detailed plan of action to redress these issues.

"This is a very sound report prepared by a highly-credentialed third party who has been able to bring a fresh perspective to some entrenched problems in the international student market.

"We believe it has laid out a solid framework to overcome major issues that have threatened Australia's reputation for quality international education.

"We welcome the proposed establishment of a single Tuition Protection Service which provides a much-needed safeguard for students who are innocently caught up in college failures.

"It is sensible that the cost of this scheme is proposed to be risk-based but as public TAFE institutes represent no risk to international students they should not have to subsidise the operations of private colleges.

"TDA is concerned that the TAFE institutes that present no risk to the consumer are being penalized and linked to a scheme that by its own admission includes high risk providers. It does not in our view provide satisfactory consumer protection.

"Action to address problems of agents and commissions and the introduction of financial penalties should remove incentives to exploit loopholes and use education as a mechanism for residency.

"We believe that the proposed tighter regulation of the industry is overdue and that the measures outlined will help to protect individual students and also enhance Australia's reputation as a destination for overseas students.

"While it is welcome to see regulations strengthened in this blueprint, it will be to no avail if they are not rigorously enforced by Government regulators," Ms Caven said.

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