

MEDIA STATEMENT

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IHEA welcomes official consultation process for the Australian Strategy for International Education 2021-2030

IHEA supports new thinking and the student-centred approach

Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA) welcomes today's official launch of the consultation process for the Federal Government's Australian Strategy for International Education 2021-2030.

"IHEA thanks Education Minister, Hon Alan Tudge MP for his presentation today. The Australian Strategy for International Education is critical to the future of international higher education in this country and appropriate consultation with the sector will be essential to get it right," said IHEA CEO, Simon Finn.

"We very much welcome new and innovative thinking, with an approach that is centred on the student experience. We thank the Minister for his acknowledgement of the patience of international students currently studying offshore or waiting to commence their onshore study once borders reopen. IHEA also extends its gratitude to these students and looks forward to warmly welcoming them back as soon as feasible."

"IHEA recognises the primary importance of ensuring the safety of the Australian community in any relaxation of restriction on student visa entry and the ongoing need for safe quarantining arrangements. It is heartening to hear Minister Tudge's continued acknowledgement of the importance of the return of international students and his commitment to working with the states and the sector on pilot programs while the vaccine rollout is underway."

"While the consultation process will inform the long-term strategy, it is critical that in the short-term the industry recovers from the impacts of COVID-19 travel restrictions. International education attracts 750,000 students to Australia each year, contributed \$37.5 billion to the economy last financial year and supports approximately 250,000 jobs. The Australian economy needs the industry to resume operations as soon as possible and IHEA is working closely with government to achieve this."

IHEA looks forward to participating in the Australian Strategy for International Education 2021-2030 consultation process over the coming months. IHEA Members are ready for international arrivals and have implemented COVIDSafe campus plans built on rigid compliance with health orders, safe classroom teaching environments, flexible course delivery and safe campus operations for all staff, students and visitors.

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