



MEDIA RELEASE

ISANA calls for more funds for welfare support for international students.

In light of the current safety crisis among international students, ISANA: International Education Association urges increased spending in support of these students.

The present legislation, Education Services for Overseas Students Act and the accompanying National Code of Practice 2007, provides a strong benchmark for appropriate support but in the current situation it is obviously not good enough.

Governments need to increase spending on research and professional development in the area to ensure that the interpretation of the legislation is in the spirit of the law and not just to the letter of the law.

“Many education providers are not being held accountable in this area”, says Dr Felicity Fallon, President of ISANA. She goes on to say, “Education providers need to employ and empower appropriately qualified support personnel who specialise in dealing with international students.”

AEI figures indicate that Australia’s international enrolment numbers increased by 78% over the five years to 2007. International sources recommend one specialist support advisor for every 300 international students. The recent trend in Australian higher education sector has been to decrease the number of these specialist support advisors. “The money-making emphasis within the industry works against the delivery of good support services”, says Dr Fallon.

ISANA is working with the federal government to attempt to fill the gap.

There are industry indicators that the provision of information about local knowledge is vital to international student safety. ISANA has developed a number of resources in this area. These are freely available to the industry on the ISANA website (www.isana.org.au) and include the Rainbow Guide, a "best practice" template for all education providers offering services in Australia.

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