

## **GOVERNMENT RHETORIC NEEDS MORE ACTION**

The Migration Institute of Australia congratulates the Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, for her visit to India, but warns diplomacy must be backed up with changes to the regulation of education agents as well as ‘shonky’ educational institutions.

“We welcome the government’s program of getting rid of ‘shonky’ colleges but we now need to also have firm action to ensure education agents meet appropriate standards. Another part of the problem is that overseas education agents who have no qualifications, standards or regulation continue to give migration advice.” says Maurene Horder, CEO of the Migration Institute of Australia.

International students who study in Australia with the aim of eventually getting permanent residence can use a recognised pathway of General Skilled Migration which specifically accepts an overseas student’s Australian qualifications.

“As long as the Minister insists that education and migration issues are separate, a much-needed whole-of-government approach to regulate and monitor the education and migration process for overseas students continues to be neglected. The nexus between education and migration must become more transparent. Until then, shonky colleges and unscrupulous operators will continue to flourish.”

The Institute’s recommendations include:

- Introduce a ‘provisional residency visa’ for high-calibre overseas students to better satisfy Australia’s skills demands, and to provide a transparent pathway to permanent residence.
- Amend definition of who may provide immigration advice
- Regulate the qualifications and activities of education agents
- Declare commissions paid by education providers to increase transparency
- Ensure greater certainty of migration outcomes for overseas students eg remove retrospective legislation and policy changes for current students

The Migration Institute of Australia has submitted more detailed proposals to the Senate Inquiry into the Welfare of International Students.

It is in Australia’s best interests to gain highly skilled overseas students whilst treating all visa holders fairly and honestly.

**Available for Interview:**

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