

FOUNDATION PROGRAMS WORKING GROUP
1ST MEETING 3RD MARCH 2005

Terms Of Reference

Working group members agreed that their role was to build on the outcomes of the Foundation Programs Workshop conducted in September 2004.

Scope and terms of reference of the Working Group are defined as follows:

1. Refine and agree a definition of Foundation Programs for international students
2. Identify core criteria of foundation programs (to underpin a consistent national framework for delivery to overseas students)
3. Work collaboratively to explore quality and accreditation issues, review options and their relative impacts, and recommend a future approach which reflects:
 - The nature of FPs for overseas students
 - Agreed contemporary CRICOS registration requirements
 - Accepted nomenclature
 - Quality assurance and accreditation mechanisms across the vocational education and training, schools and higher education sectors
 - Use of existing State/Territory accreditation regimes
4. Represent discrete stakeholder groups on (1) to (3) inclusive above, through effective communication and consultation within member's constituencies;
5. On conclusion of work, make recommendations as appropriate to other bodies (such as AESOC and MCEETYA);
6. Recommend research and analysis of data held by higher education providers into outcomes of Foundation Programs for overseas students, and factors influencing student success, as an input to good practice.

Recommendations

The working group recommends that stakeholders:

1. Consider and endorse the definition and core criteria of 'standard' Foundation Programs drafted by the working group;
2. Advise FP providers of the introduction of the finalized definition and core criteria from January 2006;

3. Consider use of CRICOS as a registration mechanism, to review and redefine Foundation Programs and subsequently incorporate endorsed FPs in a unique data field;
4. Clarify accreditation arrangements and impediments/enablers to (3) above i.e. FPs as registered non award programs (for example seek input from HEROS);
5. Endorse use of transition arrangements which do not disadvantage FP providers, or overseas students, in the interim until full implementation; and
6. Support future implementation with introduction of Good Practice Guidelines.

N.B. Existing arrangements continue for accelerated Foundation Programs.

Next Steps/Actions Arising

1. Document draft recommendations (facilitator/DEST)
2. DEST to distribute to working group members
3. WG members circulate within their constituencies
4. WG members report on issues to DEST
5. DEST to coordinate feedback and work to achieve a consensus
6. Recommendations to AESOC/AVCC for decision (via DEST and the representatives of these bodies on the Working Group)
7. Recommendations/advice provided for decision or information as necessary to MCEETYA