

**OUTCOMES OF UNIVERSITIES
TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION GOOD PRACTICE PROJECTS**

FINAL REPORT

**Commissioned by Australian Education International
Department of Education, Science and Training**

October 2006

About This Report

This report was commissioned by Australian Education International (AEI) in the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). It aims to disseminate the outcomes from the 15 university transnational education good practice projects which AEI funded in 2005 and to point to future directions and work. AEI originally contracted the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (AVCC) to manage the university projects. AEI contracted the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA) to manage the present dissemination project.

About AEI and DEST

DEST is a Department within the Australian Government tasked with providing national education and training leadership. DEST works with States and Territories, industry, other agencies and the community in support of the Government's objectives.

AEI works within DEST to integrate the development of international government relations with support for the international activities of Australia's education and training community.

For further information go to: <http://aei.dest.gov.au/Aei/Default.aspx>

About IEAA

The International Education Association of Australia (IEAA) is a lead professional organization representing members from the higher education, vocational education and training, English language and schools sectors working in international education. Membership is drawn from within Australia and internationally.

IEAA's mission is to enhance the quality and standing of Australian international education by:

- (1) Serving the professional needs and interests of members, with a view to improving the quality of professional knowledge, skills and discourse;
- (2) Encouraging high quality, informed and ethical professional practice among members; and
- (3) Promoting international education with governments, education organizations and within the community.

For further information go to: www.ieaa.org.au.

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FOREWORD

This report is the final report of a three part project commissioned by Australian Education International (AEI) and carried out by the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA). The project aimed to disseminate the outcomes of fifteen transnational good practice projects conducted in 2005 by fourteen Australian universities with the financial support of AEI, and to propose future directions and actions to further enhance good practice in Australian TNE.

This Final Report builds on substantial work undertaken in Phase 1 of the project to synthesize and present the outcomes of the fifteen university projects in an accessible format. This resulted in the preparation and dissemination of a major *Synthesis Report*, including a substantial set of *Provider Resources*. The Final Report should be read in conjunction with the earlier *Synthesis Report* and the associated resources.

The Final Report incorporates significant conclusions reached by industry about the university projects which occurred during a major Workshop conducted as part of Phase 2 of the present project to discuss the *Synthesis Report*. Over 100 industry members from the higher education, VTE and ELICOS sectors, as well as from government and from peak bodies participated in the Workshop, presented jointly by AEI and IEAA, in Melbourne on 2 August 2006.

The Workshop provided the opportunity for significant consultation amongst transnational education practitioners aimed at identifying and agreeing the substantive outcomes of the work done by the project universities and at determining ways in which the projects' findings might be built on to further enhance good practice in transnational education by Australian education institutions.

IEAA is most grateful to the Project Steering Group – including Stephen Trengove-Jones (AEI), Dorte Kristoffersen (AUQA), Peter Burgess (Macquarie University) and Jim Garton (Swinburne University of Technology) - for their work in conceptualizing and guiding the project and in designing the Workshop. IEAA is also most grateful to the Swinburne University project team, and especially to Ben Mackenzie and Patrick Stokes, for its contributions to the project.

The Final Project Report will be widely disseminated, including during the Australian International Education Conference to be held in Perth from 10-13 October 2006. The Report will meet the need for wider access to and knowledge about existing good practice in Australian transnational delivery and will be invaluable for practitioners throughout the industry.

Finally, IEAA looks forward to continuing to work with AEI and with institutions in all education sectors to achieve practical, concrete outcomes that enhance quality in transnational education and to help secure Australia's reputation as a high quality transnational education provider. The Association aims, in part through its newly formed Professional Section on transnational education (the Transnational Education Forum), to continue contributing to these important objectives.

Dennis Murray
Executive Director
International Education Association of Australia

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In April 2006, AEI, within the Australian Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), commissioned the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA) to assist with the dissemination of the outcomes of fifteen university good practice projects conducted by fourteen Australian universities in 2005.

These projects, together with fifteen offshore delivery good practice projects being undertaken by Registered Training Organizations in 2006 and the six further projects to be undertaken by ELICOS institutions in 2007, have been supported by AEI to promote good practice in the delivery of Australian transnational education under the Transnational Quality Strategy¹.

1.2 Project Steering Group

Peter Burgess	Convenor, IEAA Transnational Education Forum Professional Section, and Manager Transnational Programs, Macquarie University
Jim Garton	Director, Office of Transnational Education, Swinburne University of Technology (for Phase 1)
Dorte Kristoffersen	Audit Director, Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA)
Dennis Murray (Chair)	Executive Director, International Education Association of Australia (IEAA)
Stephen Trengove-Jones	Director, Offshore Quality Taskforce, Australian Education International (AEI)

1.3 Project Aims

The present project has two aims:

- To disseminate in an accessible format the concrete outcomes of the universities good practice projects conducted in 2005.
- To identify future possible directions for further enhancing good practice in Australian transnational education.

1.4 Symposium December 2005

The project builds on the Offshore Education Quality Assurance Symposium conducted by Flinders University in December 2005 in Adelaide. The symposium formed part of the universities good practice project undertaken by Flinders University and enabled the fourteen universities undertaking the universities good practice projects to attend and exchange lessons learnt. The fifteen projects were presented and discussed at the Symposium, which recommended further action to be taken for the dissemination of industry good practice in quality assurance for transnational education. The report² from the Symposium is included as Appendix 3 of the present project's *Synthesis Report* (see 1.6 below).

¹ <http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/GovernmentActivities/QAAustralianEducationAndTrainingSystem/Default.htm>

² http://www.flinders.edu.au/teach/offshore/symposium/resources/offshore_report_final.doc

1.5 Project Methodology

The present project was conducted in three phases.

Phase 1 Production of a *Synthesis Report*³ to present and disseminate the findings and outcomes of the universities good practice projects in an accessible format

Phase 2 An industry workshop to discuss the findings and outcomes of the projects and to identify matters for future consideration or action.

Phase 3 Production of a *Final Project Report* incorporating the outcomes of Phases 1 and 2.

The present report is the outcome of Phase 3.

1.6 Synthesis Report

The approach taken in developing the *Synthesis Report* was to bring together the critical elements of the fifteen university good practice project reports in a format to allow easy understanding and accessibility. The approach purposely avoided undertaking a critique of the reports or their findings. Details of the approach are described in section 1.1.4 of the *Synthesis Report*. Material from the fifteen projects were organized and presented under four predominant themes:

- Frameworks, Models and Tools
- Governance and Risk Management
- Comparable Standards
- Student Experience

Separate, brief summaries of each university good practice project report were provided for completeness (see Appendix 1 of *Synthesis Report*), and to supplement the thematic presentation of the project outcomes.

Useful tools and resources resulting from the fifteen university good practice projects are provided online⁴ as part of Phase 1 of the project.

1.7 Workshop

107 industry members from the higher education, VTE and ELICOS sectors, from state, territory and Australian governments and from industry peak bodies participated in the TNE good practice Workshop conducted as part of Phase 2 of the project. The Workshop was jointly presented by AEI and IEAA on Wednesday 2 August in the RACV Club, Melbourne⁵.

Participants were for the most part practitioners in transnational education with a wide variety of responsibilities – for strategy, policy, management, marketing, student administration, student support, teaching and research. This provided a well-spring of knowledge and experience, involving all major stakeholders, which materially enhanced the focus and quality of discussions.

³ <http://www.ieaa.org.au/IEAA/resources/File/TNE%20SYNTHESIS%20REPORT.pdf>. Appendices to the *Synthesis Report* are at: <http://www.ieaa.org.au/IEAA/resources/File/APPENDICES-TNE%20SYNTHESIS%20REPORT.pdf>

⁴ *Higher Education Transnational Good Practice Projects: Resources for Providers*, available at: <http://www.ieaa.org.au/ieaa/resources/multimedia/>

⁵ The Workshop program and the organizations represented at the Workshop are given in Appendix 1.

AEI Chief Executive, Fiona Buffinton, and IEAA President Professor Tony Adams, provided the opening addresses, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Flinders University, Professor Dean Forbes, delivered the summary remarks⁶.

The greater part of discussions took place in eight working groups, facilitated by senior stakeholders from the industry (Appendix 2). Participants were randomly allocated to the working groups, providing mixed representation and a variety of perspectives. This was thought important to encourage comprehensive consideration of issues across and beyond particular work roles.

The working groups focused their discussions around the four themes identified by the *Synthesis Report* and reported their conclusions in plenary. All participants of the Workshop participated in two breakout groups and had the opportunity to contribute to discussions under two of four themes.

The conclusions of the working groups were collated and along with the *Synthesis Report* provide the basis for the conclusions in the present report. There was a remarkably broad consensus of opinion on many matters, including significant reinforcement for many of the findings and conclusions of the *Synthesis Report*.

1.8 Implications for Other Sectors

The content of the fifteen university projects and much of the commentary and discussion during the Workshop was higher education sector focused. Nevertheless, many of the principles as well as much of the practice of TNE are applicable across sectors, and was clearly acknowledged to be so during the Workshop. The involvement in the Workshop of participants from outside the higher education sector materially enhanced discussions and the reflections made and conclusions reached are to a degree applicable across the sectors. That is not to say that sector specific conclusions do not apply, they do. However, the conclusions presented in this report are offered as possible points of commonality that seem to be valid across sectors. These conclusions need to be tested in respect of the other sectors, in particular through the industry projects being managed for AEI by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) and NEAS Australia.

⁶ Available at <http://www.ieaa.org.au/IEAA/resources/File/Fiona%20Buffinton%20Opening%20Address.pdf>.

2. KEY MESSAGES AND OUTCOMES

A number of key messages emerged as outcomes of the project. These key messages reflect the considered views of industry about how good practice in Australian transnational education can be identified, embedded and further enhanced. They are widely and strongly supported and are clear pointers to future actions, at both institutional and industry-wide levels.

The key messages emerging from the project are discussed in detail throughout the remainder of this report. In summary, they reflect the strongly held desire of the industry for:

- Clear and agreed terms in TNE and their consistent usage.
- Guiding frameworks, benchmarked internationally and flexible enough to be valid for a wide diversity of Australian providers depending on their circumstances.
- Improved research on agreed priority aspects of transnational activity - particularly those where little or no research has yet been undertaken - but including on more familiar aspects where practice could be better informed by improved research providing more effective review or validation.
- An active program of data collection measuring transnational activity and trends internationally and better describing the context for transnational education applying in particular countries and to underpin benchmarking efforts - with a view to Australia more effectively monitoring, understanding and responding to the changing TNE context.
- Vehicles for disseminating and accessing practical exemplars, resources and tools which enhance good practice in TNE - involving independent evaluation and integration of the diverse range of existing good practice examples - again, tailored to suit a variety of provider circumstances.
- Improved professionalism in TNE through continued communication and networking among practitioners and an active program of professional development for the individuals involved in TNE applying across education sectors and supported by industry and governments.
- Active cooperation between all stakeholders in TNE within and between education sectors and including an active partnership with government to further enhance good practice in Australian TNE as a shared responsibility.

3. DEFINITIONS

The terminology used in transnational education is extensive and frequently specialized. There is always a danger on the one hand that terms could be defined ambiguously and used vaguely or inconsistently or, on the other hand be overly prescriptive or not sufficiently comprehensive.

There is an expressed desire amongst the Australian industry for a clear and agreed set of terms in TNE and for their consistent usage.

Firstly, there is a virtually unanimous call for the scope of the definition of “transnational education” to be widened to encompass distance education, including online delivery. Distance delivery offshore does not substantially differ from distance delivery onshore. Many of the quality assurance requirements are the same. Moreover, the exclusion of distance and online delivery from the present definition of “transnational education” is bedeviling both data collection (and therefore a clear understanding of the scale, character and directions in TNE) as well as efforts by institutions and systems to ensure distance education delivery to offshore students meets the normally expected TNE quality assurance standards.

Secondly, there is a call for more precise definition of core terms, including “comparability”, “equivalence” “frameworks”, “models”, “guidelines”, “principles”, “standards”, “benchmarks”, “best practice” and “good practice”. These terms are sometimes paired or used interchangeably. They may be used without precision and in some cases their use may be invalid. There is a need for more accurate and precise definitions, including improved clarity about what aspects of TNE activities and programs these terms apply to and in what circumstances.

Of particular interest is a more precise and valid definition of “quality assurance” as it relates to TNE. Obviously, quality assurance in TNE is a core concern of all stakeholders and from a variety of perspectives - educational, commercial, legal and political. The quality assurance literature indicates a number of possible ways to describe, define and to approach quality assurance. Some quality assurance processes purport to be “objective” and external to the matter being assessed. Other approaches involve a degree of self-referencing, e.g. “fitness for purpose”. In the Australian education context, and especially within higher education, the “fitness for purpose” approach has been taken for externally assessed quality assurance.

This having been said, there is support from industry for possible refinement of the definition of “quality assurance” within the context of Australian TNE. This would take into account sector specific requirements as necessary.

Action:

The desire amongst the Australian industry for a clear and agreed set of terms in TNE and their consistent usage means that a TNE “glossary” should be a priority project. This is best approached at an industry-wide level, with specialist institutional and sector input. The “glossary” project should be undertaken in partnership with AEI.

4. FRAMEWORKS

"Any overarching principles should be enabling and accommodate diversity while setting minimum standards and benchmarks of professional practice/process (leading to) learning outcomes" (Workshop working group summary comment).

4.1 Framework Models

Quality assurance, a prime motivation for all Australian TNE stakeholders, is widely seen as likely to be assisted by guiding "frameworks" (covering, variously - "guidelines", "principles", "standards", "benchmarks"). The Workshop produced a call for a robust and useful overall quality framework for TNE activity which would include a range of "key principles" of quality assurance and good practice, which would be widely disseminated and which would materially assist the embedding of good practice in TNE amongst Australian providers.

Amongst other things, "frameworks" are seen as embodying good (even best) practice, summarizing lessons learned and providing a basis for valid, expeditious and safe actions by sectors, institutions and by individual practitioners involved. By embodying appropriate "quality assurance" they offer the prospect of guiding practice by minimizing the prospect of making or repeating others mistakes and by eliminating the need to "reinvent the wheel". If frameworks are good, comprehensive and valid they can be trusted to be of great assistance.

It is widely perceived, however, that no single "framework" suits all needs and circumstances. Given the wide variety of sector and institutional differences (including different organizational structures, motivations and TNE delivery models used), guiding frameworks for TNE must take account of the differences involved. Any typology needs to be broad and flexible enough to accommodate organizational diversity at both sector and institutional levels.

Frameworks should apply at whole-of-system (i.e. industry-wide) level, at sector level and at institutional level. They need to be devised and tailored accordingly. There should probably be a hierarchy of frameworks descending from the general to the specific. This would allow stakeholders to "cherry pick" what is appropriate to them for particular purposes.

Broad frameworks, principles and guidelines are likely to be the most acceptable and welcome to industry generally.

Subordinate frameworks could then be provided at another level and for more particular practical circumstances. They might vary depending on sectors and reflect different institutional needs and purposes.

A major guiding principle for all frameworks is that they should involve a "whole of industry", "whole of sector" or a "whole of institution" perspective. It is a touchstone of much TNE good practice that the entire picture must be comprehended and the means found (i.e. described and practiced) to ensure that all the elements in play are managed effectively. In other words, frameworks need to be conceived, devised and operated on a systems basis.

While flexibility in frameworks is needed, it would be surprising and of concern if they were mutually exclusive. The task is to define what is necessarily common to all frameworks, at differing levels of generality, and then to build in appropriate flexibility to meet particular sector/institutional circumstances and requirements.

Frameworks should be conceived and should operate as a nested set.

4.2 Framework Content

There were clear pointers to a number of the “content” elements needed in any “framework” at whatever level.

First, frameworks need to take account of, and be informed by, clear definitions (3. above), and by international example and benchmarking (see 5. below).

Second, all frameworks at whatever level of specificity should encompass relevant quality assurance provisions, and aim at continuous improvement.

Third, frameworks should be devised covering both administrative/business and teaching and learning (“academic”) matters. While these matters overlap, each is distinct. Substantial work has been done and many good examples exist, requiring mostly codification and dissemination in a valid and effective way.

Administrative/business frameworks should include strategic alignment with the goals of the institution; governance (including leadership, change management and transparent decision making); risk assessment and management; partner selection and partner communication; due diligence; business and market planning, monitoring and review; contractual matters; regulations and compliance (onshore and offshore); consumer rights; a map of resources/contacts; and total program audit, etc. Frameworks need to be made sufficiently flexible to take account of different institutional contexts - especially differences between centralized/decentralized models.

Academic frameworks should include strategic alliance with the institution’s goals but also cover academic delivery models (including pedagogical issues relating to delivery in a language other than English, curriculum customization and curriculum development); staff qualifications/appointment; staff induction; staff development; staff exchange; and student outcomes/graduate destinations.

Fourth, frameworks need to be suitably “contextualized”. For example, country-specific good practice guidelines should include local legal TNE operating requirements; money/financial/exchange requirements; culture/communication/business negotiation practices; and so on. In a real sense, guidelines should point to development by providers of country specific business plans encompassing all the necessary contextual elements. In terms of a basic resource, and at an industry-wide level, contextualization would be materially assisted by production, probably by AEI under the overarching Transnational Quality Strategy, of country specific “Transnational Education Country Fact Sheets”. China should probably be a priority trial for such a project.

Finally, much of the content of the suggested “framework” could be populated out of the existing university projects, subject to appropriate validation and the identification of gaps in the existing information about the TNE “program cycle” (see 5. below).

Clearly, frameworks need to be updated from time to time. Different parts would require updating at different times and at different degrees of frequency. Country specific information, for example, could be quite volatile and susceptible to more frequent change. It would require regular monitoring and revision if necessary.

Frameworks and associated practical resources and tools will inform and guide good practice in TNE. They should be disseminated appropriately, including through effective professional development on an industry-wide as well as an institutional basis (see 6. and 7. below).

Dissemination mechanisms for updated frameworks, or specific information within them, would need to be timely and user friendly (e.g. in terms of alerts to industry about significant changes and easy access to revised frameworks). Clearly, the web offers the best avenue for effective and up-to-date dissemination of revised information.

Action:

The Workshop strongly endorsed the production of simple, robust and useful overall quality framework for TNE activity which would include a range of “key principles” of quality assurance and good practice, to materially assist the embedding of good practice in TNE amongst Australian providers.

Industry would support the conduct of a project, commissioned by AEI under the Transnational Quality Strategy, for the mapping and development of a set of overlapping frameworks (comprising principles, standards, benchmarks and guidelines as appropriate), as described above, at both industry-wide and institutional levels. The latter frameworks would need to be flexible enough to be used by different types of universities of differing sizes and operating under centralized/decentralized management models.

These frameworks should be contextualized by incorporating country-specific good practice guidelines. The development of “transnational Education Country Fact Sheets again by AEI, would materially assist this process.

The project would also need to test that the “model” frameworks are valid and that their content actually reflects good practice. The mechanism for this should be an expert industry group undertaking peer evaluation, and possibly also involve independent testing/checking of specified “frameworks,” or parts of them, in a “live” operational context.

5. RESEARCH AND DATA

There is widespread agreement that continuing improvement in Australian TNE good practice must be research based and data driven. There is a need for more and better research and data in a wide range of TNE areas:

- Improved research on agreed priority aspects of transnational activity - particularly those aspects where little or no research has yet been undertaken - but including in depth research on more familiar aspects where practice could be better informed by improved research providing more effective review or validation.
- An active program of data collection measuring transnational activity and trends internationally and better describing the context for transnational education applying in particular countries, and to underpin benchmarking efforts - with a view to Australia more effectively monitoring, understanding and responding to the changing TNE context.

5.1 Research

Identified research priorities include:

- Broadly, setting an applied research agenda in TNE.
- Investigation and clarification of definitions, especially the meaning of “quality assurance” in the TNE context, contextualized for different education sectors and benchmarked internationally (see 3. above).
- Evaluating and deciding what “good practice” is and whether and in what way TNE quality processes actually ensure good practice, again, benchmarked internationally.
- Identifying and benchmarking international practice, including quality assurance “frameworks” for quality TNE delivery (see 4. above).
- Investigation of regulatory frameworks in TNE target countries and production and dissemination of robust, simple, codified and regularly updated information (e.g. “Transnational Education Country Fact Sheets”) on a country-by-country basis (see 4. above).
- Investigation of how to leverage Australia’s investment in bilateral relations to advance TNE opportunities, on a country-by country basis beginning with agreed priority countries.
- Investigation into the methodology required to determine the market value of TNE, involving consideration of return on investment, to provide a clearer picture of the net worth of TNE to Australia and to different education sectors.
- Investigation of intercultural communication in the TNE context – to develop knowledge, understanding and skills (including business communication and negotiation skills) to provide the basis for development of appropriate resources and tools useful across the industry and education sectors.
- Investigation of the relationship between curriculum, graduate attributes and graduate outcomes/competencies to better inform the debate on “comparability”. This should include longitudinal studies comparing offshore and onshore student performance and graduate outcomes.

- Investigation of the role of the “international office” in facilitating/coordinating quality assurance processes for TNE across the whole of the institution.
- Investigation of professional development needs of practitioners in TNE with a view to identifying core “transformative” knowledge and skills, as well as resources and tools, to improve practice - paying attention to different work roles (management, administration, strategy, planning, business practice, curriculum planning and development, and pedagogy).
- Testing of offshore teaching models aimed at good practice, focused around agreed country priorities, and benchmarked internationally.
- Investigation of the specific role of TNE on internationalizing curricula, onshore and offshore.

5.2 Data

Identified data collection priorities include:

- Systematic, comprehensive, regular and up-to-date data on Australia’s TNE activities covering all education sectors and including student, program and financial data.
- Data measuring competitor activity and trends in TNE, especially focused on Australia’s priority markets and differentiating the impacts on in-country and in-Australia enrolment of students from the countries concerned.

In the case of both research and data, attention should be given to explicitly linking the outcomes of the Higher Education, VTE and ELICOS good practice projects to identify shared research and data priorities and needs and to ensure work undertaken allows for build up of a comprehensive and integrated picture, with data and research findings having cross/multi-sectoral use wherever possible.

Action:

The Workshop strongly supported initiatives which would lead to the development of an applied research and data agenda and the identification and conduct of a range of priority research and data collection projects, to underpin practical action and decision making across the board on TNE matters and to enhance good practice at industry-wide and institutional levels.

It would be appropriate for industry and government to work in partnership to map out a priority TNE research and data collection agenda and, where appropriate for AEI to fund agreed priority projects.

6. DISSEMINATION OF EXEMPLARS, RESOURCES AND TOOLS

Good practice can be facilitated effectively through production and dissemination of exemplars that provide accessible and easily used models of “how to go about it”.

As indicated above (see 4.2), these need to be independently evaluated and validated. A wide range of existing good practice examples need to be more effectively integrated into a comprehensive and more easily accessed set of TNE resources and tools. Again, resources and tools need to be tailored to suit a variety of provider circumstances.

As a first step it will be necessary to evaluate, integrate, map and undertake a gap analysis of existing “good practice” exemplars, resources and tools in the existing university projects⁷.

6.1 Priority Resources and Tools

Priority resources and tools identified by industry include:

- “Frameworks” that provide a comprehensive conceptual basis and systematic/structured approach to quality assurance in TNE program delivery.
- As part of this, policy and practice standards/guidelines. In this context, consideration should be given to the feasibility of devising a statement of “minimum standards for service delivery in TNE” (including possibly uniform consumer protection guidelines, equity and access issues, grievance handling, etc.). Such a statement should be developed at three levels (1) universal principles (Australia/industry-wide); (2) sector specific; and (3) institution specific.
- Other tools in the form of checklists, guiding tables and task-based questions. Again, these should be tailored to industry-wide, sector and institutional level needs.
- With the support of AEI, development of “case study” exemplars, appropriately validated. These could include application examples of how frameworks, resources and tools can best be used.
- The content of resources and tools should be comprehensive, covering all aspects of program planning and delivery, viz.:

project conceptualization and investigation; program development (including investigation of the regulatory environment, including academic accreditation); partner selection; academic delivery model; business plan (including cost-benefit analysis, risk assessment and management and academic, administrative and resource delivery and quality assurance plans); contract development and contract models; staff professional development; student expectations/perspectives; program and partner management; program audit (monitoring, evaluation, and review); exit plan.

- Resources/tools currently unavailable (e.g. “financial analysis model/tool”; “code of student rights/responsibilities”; “student consultation/survey templates”).

⁷ In addition to the examples provided by the university good practice projects, there are other resources which should be drawn and built on. These include AUQA's *Good Practice Database* which contains good practice examples in TNE derived from the AUQA Audit Reports.

There is a challenge here to blend “hard” and “soft” elements in planning - *“on the one hand, the financial and technology aspects and, on the other hand, building and sustaining the skills and process to work successfully in a multicultural environment”* .

6.2 Dissemination Mechanisms

Dissemination mechanisms include:

- An on-line “clearinghouse” of major resources/tools (including research and data) and the active, ongoing promotion of this resource. The AEI and IEAA websites would be appropriate sites for such a clearinghouse, cross-referenced by hotlinks to ensure comprehensive coverage and availability of agreed resources.
- AEI, peak body and professional body newsletters and other publications disseminating knowledge about good practice).
- Face to face professional development provision. IEAA is well placed to initiate and encourage relevant professional development in TNE (see 7. below).

Action:

AEI should establish a small, expert group to evaluate, integrate, map and undertake a gap analysis of existing “good practice” exemplar resources and tools in the existing university projects. The fifteen university project authors could possibly be invited to reflect back on and if necessary update relevant tools. A short list of specified resources and tools should be prepared and selected resources and tools should be independently tested in a “live” operational context and against international benchmarks using peer review.

An associated project should be to develop an online clearinghouse on the AEI and IEAA websites. As resources and tools are validated they should be added to the clearinghouse sites.

7. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND NETWORKING

The importance of professional development and networking in achieving good practice in transnational delivery was repeatedly referred to throughout the Workshop. The individuals involved, their skills, knowledge and interactions, and their professionalism generally, are critical to ensuring quality.

There is a growing sense of TNE as a distinct, specialized area of interest and concern by many working in the field, and a growing desire to consolidate what is known and to build on it in a professional manner. The Workshop indicated a strong desire for continuing communication by TNE practitioners to:

- exchange views and ideas about transnational education strategy, policy and practice
- share knowledge and skills
- encourage standards of good practice, and
- to provide practical advice and support to colleagues involved in transnational education.

A number of priority “topics” for inclusion in professional development initiatives were identified by the workshop:

- Leading and managing TNE projects/programs.
- Managing TNE within an institutional context.
- Planning TNE quality assurance and managing risk.
- Negotiating and drafting TNE contracts.
- TNE financial planning and evaluation.
- Cross-cultural communication in TNE.
- Using TNE resources and tools.

Action:

Continued networking among TNE professionals and enhancement of professional development of practitioners should be supported by industry and government.

The success of the Melbourne Workshop suggests that it would be valuable to conduct a regular TNE workshop or conference, probably annually, supported by AEI and organized in partnership with industry.

Professional organizations such as the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA), through its Transnational Education Forum (TNEF)⁸, also provide a focus for professional networking. The Association is in the process of developing a suite of TNE professional development offerings relevant to all sectors. As with IEAA’s other core professional development in strategic marketing, financial management, compliance/quality assurance), professional development in TNE will be offered at introductory, intermediate and advanced levels⁹.

These initiatives should be encouraged and supported by institutions, industry and government.

⁸ <http://www.ieaa.org.au/Professional%20Section/>. Terms of Reference for the TNEF are given in Appendix 3.

⁹ By agreement between IEAA and selected education institutions, IEAA professional development offerings allow participants, if they so wish, to gain credit towards formal award courses in international education available at the VTE and higher education levels.

8. INDUSTRY-GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

A striking feature of the workshop was the very positive tenor in which it was received by all participants. Considerable enthusiasm resulted for continuing work to ensure good practice throughout the Australian TNE industry. This is seen as a joint responsibility of industry and government, a mutually desired partnership in which each has its special role to play.

Within industry, competition amongst providers is seen as subordinate to a shared sense of commitment to and responsibility for ensuring good practice in Australian TNE. There is a strongly expressed desire for industry-wide cooperation and collaboration across all education sectors and, in close association with government, to advance knowledge and understanding of good practice in Australian TNE, ensuring its dissemination and embedding at both institutional and industry-wide levels.

As mentioned (7. above), there is a strong desire for continued communication between practitioners, to share data, insights and in-country experiences, to develop professional expertise and for support and networking.

Action:

Partnership between industry and government to encourage good practice in Australian TNE is critical. There is an important role for government in facilitating and supporting initiatives the industry itself takes, where these accord with government priorities. Support might most appropriately take the form of project funding where appropriate. Priority projects include development of a TNE "glossary"; production of a robust and useful overall set of quality frameworks; the development of a TNE applied research and data agenda and conduct of priority projects; and the refinement of exemplar resources and tools and their dissemination.

9. SUMMARY OF ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Definitions

Develop a TNE “glossary” to ensure an agreed set of definitions within TNE and the appropriate and consistent use of terms. This is best approached at an industry-wide level, with specialist institutional and sector input. The “glossary” project should be coordinated and supported by government, probably through AEI.

Frameworks

Produce a simple, robust and useful overall quality framework for TNE activity which includes a range of “key principles” of quality assurance and good practice.

This project should be commissioned by AEI under the Transnational Quality Strategy and should map and develop of a set of overlapping frameworks (comprising principles, standards, benchmarks and guidelines as appropriate), at both industry-wide and institutional levels. The latter frameworks should be flexible enough to be used by different types of universities of differing sizes and operating under centralized/decentralized management models.

These frameworks should be contextualized by incorporating country-specific good practice guidelines. The development of “transnational Education Country Fact Sheets, again probably by AEI, would materially assist this process.

The project should also test that the “model” frameworks are valid and that their content actually reflects good practice. The mechanism for this should be an expert industry group undertaking peer evaluation, and possibly also involve independent testing/checking of specified “frameworks,” or parts of them, in a “live” operational context.

Research and Data

Develop an Australian TNE applied research and data agenda. Identify and conduct a range of priority research and data collection projects, to underpin practical action and decision making across the board on TNE matters and to enhance good practice at industry-wide and institutional levels.

It would be appropriate for industry and government to work in partnership to map out a priority TNE research and data collection agenda and, where appropriate for AEI to fund agreed priority projects.

Resources and Tools

AEI should establish a small, expert group to evaluate, integrate, map and undertake a gap analysis of “good practice” exemplar resources and tools in the existing university projects. A short list of specified resources and tools should be prepared and selected resources and tools should be independently tested in a “live” operational context and against international benchmarks using peer review

Account should be taken of other examples of TNE good practice available outside the existing university projects.

An associated project should be to develop an online clearinghouse on the AEI and IEAA (and other appropriate) websites. As resources and tools are validated they should be added to the clearinghouse sites.

Professional Development and Networking

Professional development initiatives in transnational education planned and delivered by professional organizations such as IEAA should be encouraged and supported by institutions, industry and government. The success of the Melbourne Workshop suggests that it would be valuable to conduct a regular TNE workshop or conference, probably annually, supported by AEI and organized in partnership with industry.

Industry-Government Partnership

There is an important role for government in facilitating and supporting initiatives the industry itself takes, where these accord with government priorities. Support might most appropriately take the form of seed funding for agreed initiatives on a project basis. Priority projects include development of a TNE "glossary"; production of a robust and useful overall set of quality frameworks; the development of a TNE applied research and data agenda and conduct of priority projects; the refinement of exemplar resources and tools and their dissemination; and support for development of appropriate TNE professional development programs and their delivery.

Appendices

PROGRAM

8.30 – 9.00	Workshop registration	
9.00 – 9.15	Welcome	Professor Tony Adams President IEAA
9.15 – 9.35	Opening Address	Fiona Buffinton Chief Executive AEI
9.35 – 10.00	Synthesis Report and Program for the Day Formation of breakout groups	Dennis Murray Executive Director IEAA
10.00 - 10.20	Morning Tea	
10.30 – 12.00	THEME 1. FRAMEWORKS, MODELS AND TOOLS	
	Group 1 Facilitator: Mr Peter Burgess Director Transnational Programs Macquarie University	Group 2 Facilitator: Mr Kevin Brett Researcher in TNE Quality
	THEME 2. GOVERNANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT	
	Group 3 Facilitator: Ms Robyn Phillips Head, International Student Programs University of Ballarat 1.1.1	Group 4 Facilitator: Dr Anna Ciccarelli Executive Director and Vice President International and Development University of South Australia. Vice- President IEAA
12.00	Reports back	
12.30 - 1.00	Lunch	
1.00 - 2.30	THEME 3. COMPARABLE STANDARDS	
	Group 5 Facilitator: Professor Angela Delves Deputy Vice-Chancellor Central Queensland University	Group 6 Facilitator: Ms Linda Laker Manager, International Quality Branch, AEI
1.00 - 2.30	THEME 4. STUDENT EXPERIENCE	
	Group 7 Facilitator: Ms Antony Stella Audit Director, AUQA	Group 8 Facilitator: Ms Ann Forster Manager Special Projects Office of Vice-Chancellor University of Sydney
2.30-3.00	Reports Back	
3.00-3.20	Afternoon Tea	
3.20 – 3.55	Summary and Next Directions	Professor Dean Forbes Deputy Vice-Chancellor International Flinders University and Chair of the DVC/PVC International Committee (AVCC)
3.55-4.00	Conclusion	

Workshop Participants Organizations

Australian Council of Independent Vocational Colleges (ACIVC)
Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA)
Australian Education International (AEI)
Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee (AVCC)
Bond University
Box Hill Institute of TAFE
Central Queensland University
Charles Darwin University
Curtin University
Deakin University
Department of Education and Training (Vic)
Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (SA)
Edith Cowan University
Education Queensland International
English Australia
Flinders University
Griffith University
Higher Education Group DEST
International Education Association of Australia (IEAA)
La Trobe University
Macquarie University
Monash University
Murdoch University
National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)
NEAS Australia
Newcastle University
Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE
Queensland University of Technology
RMIT University
Southbank Institute of Technology
Swinburne University
University of Adelaide
University of Ballarat
University of New England
University of New South Wales
University of Queensland
University of South Australia
University of Southern Queensland
University of the Sunshine Coast
University of Sydney
University of Tasmania
University of Western Australia
Victoria University
Victorian Qualifications Authority
Western Institute of TAFE

Working Group Facilitators

Theme 1. Frameworks, Models and Tools

Peter Burgess Director Transnational Programs, Macquarie University

Kevin Brett Researcher in TNE Quality

Theme 2. Governance and Risk Management

Robyn Phillips Head, International Student Programs, University of Ballarat

Anna Ciccarelli Executive Director and Vice President International and
Development, University of South Australia, and
Vice-President, International Education Association of Australia
(IEAA)

Theme 3. Comparable Standards

Angela Delves Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Central Queensland University

Linda Laker Manager, International Quality Branch, Australian Education
International (AEI)

Theme 4. Student Experience

Antony Stella Audit Director, Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA)

Ann Forster Manager Special Projects, Office of Vice-Chancellor, the
University of Sydney

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

Transnational Education Forum

Terms of Reference

Take a leadership role and provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, sharing of knowledge and skills and provision of advice to IEAA members in the professional area of transnational education.

In particular:

1. Provide a focus for the exchange of views and ideas about transnational education strategy, policy and practice amongst members.
2. Encourage standards of good practice in transnational education amongst members, including compliance with Australian and host country legal requirements.
3. Encourage, promote and where appropriate undertake benchmarking in transnational education.
4. Provide advice to the IEAA Board about transnational education policy and practice, including:
 - Priorities for data collection and research in transnational education
 - Dissemination of information about transnational education matters
 - Impacts of government legislation on transnational policy and practice
 - Encouragement of good practice in transnational education amongst members
 - Identification and prioritization of professional development needs of members involved in transnational education as well as wider industry needs
 - Advocacy about transnational education matters on behalf of members
 - Advancement and promotion of Australia as a high quality transnational education provider.
5. Operate under its own governance structure in accordance with the letter and spirit of the IEAA Constitution and IEAA policy.