

ANNUAL REPORT

ISANA International Education Association Inc

2020



International Education Association Inc.

www.isana.org.au

EDUCATE – ADVOCATE

ISANA – International Education Association:

- Provides a means for the exchange of information and networking.
- Facilitates the professional development of members.
- Builds links with associated organisations both locally and overseas; and
- Liaises with government and other agencies on policy matters relating to international students in Australia and New Zealand.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

On behalf of the ISANA National Council I am presenting this year's annual report to members of the Association.

But firstly, it is necessary for me to say a few words on the year to date. As this was the beginning of my second term as President, Council and I were looking to develop and implement initiatives, including a two to three-year strategic plan and the consolidation and update of our Constitution and Governance Manual. However, to say 2020 has been a difficult year would be to understate the issues, challenges and ongoing unexpected consequences that have thrown everyone's plans into disarray and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

I want to express my sincere thanks to each and every member for the work you have done this year, both in your paid work and/or as a volunteer, to support our international students and the industry.

I hope you have each taken some time to look after yourself no matter what the circumstances you now find yourself facing. ISANA is here for you and we will be looking at implementing strategies to assist members over the next 12-24 months and will be inviting suggestions and feedback to deliver what is required by you and to support you. Although everyone will be experiencing unique circumstances, remember you are part of an organisational network of like-minded and like-placed people, so please reach out if you need support or just want to share ideas or talk.

ISANA National Council

The National Executive, along with the Branch Presidents constitute the ISANA National Council. The Council is responsible for the management of the Association. In 2020 Council had no vacancies or resignations mid-term. The Council members for the last reporting period were:

- National President – Bronwyn Gilson (Executive)
- National Vice-President – Sarah Lisle (Executive)
- National Treasurer – Molly Bonnefin (Executive)
- National Vice-President (*Professional Development*) –Samantha Hilbig (Executive)
- National Vice-President (*Planning and Development*) – Sharon Cook (Executive)
- National Communications Manager – Roshana Sultan (Executive)
- New South Wales/ACT Branch President– Annette Kalczyńska (Branch)
- South Australia/Northern Territory Branch President – Sarah Parrington (Branch)
- Queensland Branch President – Samantha Hilbig (Branch)
- Victoria/Tasmania Branch President – Margaret Dawson (Branch)
- Western Australia Branch *representative* – Kathryn Williams
- Secretariat – Phoebe Thiessen (lead)

Global Reputation Taskforce

ISANA was invited to join the Global Reputation Taskforce, created by the Federal Minister for Education the Hon Dan Tehan, and chaired by the Hon Phil Honeywood (IEAA). The first meeting was held on 3 February and the last on 19 June 2020. The Taskforce drew together members from all international education stakeholders and at the height of the pandemic brought up issues for discussion with those affected, including the Department of Education, Skills & Employment, Department of Health, Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade, and Department of Home Affairs. These issues were then relayed to the relevant Federal Minister for advice and consideration. It was essential that ISANA was part of this Taskforce as it allowed our expert voice to be heard on student and staff welfare issues.

Professional Development (PD)

With 'lockdowns' and travel restrictions in place, ISANA made the decision to increase the number of PD sessions offered to members and non-members.

To acknowledge the difficulties members were facing, PD topics were developed to assist with practical and mental health issues as well as networking opportunities. There was no cost to members for most PD sessions to ensure ready access to the information and discussions.

Submissions

- 29 January 2020: provided a submission to the Australian Government Productivity Commission on the *Mental Health Draft Report* (October 2019)
- 9 October 2020: provided a submission to the Department of Education, Skills & Employment on *Improving Regulation of Supplementary Courses for Overseas Students*

Collaborations

CISA (Council of International Students Australia)

ISANA has continued to work closely with the Council of International Students Australia (CISA) and was invited to help induct the new Council members elected in August 2020. At their AGM ISANA was the Returning Officer (Annette Kalczynska ACT/NSW Branch President). The ISANA President was part of the *Value for Money and Sector Sustainability Panel* at the CISA online Conference and a member of the selection panel for the CISA Awards.

ISANA recently revised its Memorandum of Understanding with CISA who are now reviewing it.

IEAA (International Education Association of Australia)

Danielle Hartridge (IEAA Admissions & Compliance; ISANA Vic/Tas Treasurer) developed the first joint IEAA/ISANA professional development sessions. The Under 18 Masterclasses were run in October-November 2020 and attracted over 210 registrations.

A draft Memorandum of Understanding is currently in progress with the aim of bringing ISANA and IEAA closer together collaboratively.

Austrade

At the conclusion of the Global Reputation Taskforce, ISANA and Austrade agreed to establish periodical meetings to ensure a two-way transfer of information and ideas guaranteeing the ongoing sharing of the valuable work each organisation is undertaking.

Grants

National Code Tutorial (NCT) - <http://www.isana.org.au/national-code-tutorial/>

In late 2017 ISANA submitted and was successful in securing an Enabling Growth and Innovation Grant (EGI) valued at \$128,233 to develop and deliver an updated instructional tool for international education professionals to understand and meet their obligations under the National Code 2018.

The Project went 'live' on 9 June 2020 and along with all the Testers and Content Advisors, I need to thank the following people for their tireless work over the two and a half years of the project:

- Mary Ann Seow – NCT Project Officer
- Molly Bonnefin – NCT project committee member
- Bronwyn Gilson – NCT project committee member
- Danielle Hartridge – NCT Contract
- Paula Durance – NCT Contract
- Jack Dunstan – NCT Contract (IT)
- Department of Education, Skills and Employment

ESOS for Students - Consumer Protection and the National Code: Empowering International Students

ISANA National secured an International Student Welfare Program (ISWP) grant from the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions Victoria to develop a product to enhance international students' understanding of ESOS and the National Code. The Project virtual launch was held on 28 August 2020 and the resources are located at <http://www.isana.org.au/esosforstudents/>. On behalf of ISANA I want to thank these key people for their support:

- Danielle Hartridge (Project lead)
- Molly Bonnefin (Project officer)
- James Borman (DJPR Study Melbourne)

And our fantastic student volunteers:

- Radhika Agarwal
- Shahnaaz Banu
- Muhammad Faisal
- Meiyen Lumy Liu
- Thi Minh Chau Nguyen
- Sean Ryan
- Jonquil Mili Tarol

Miscellaneous

ISANA Website

During 2020 the ISANA Website was redeveloped by the ISANA Secretariat to improve ease of access/use, visual appeal and to retain resources and the history of our organisation.

Social Media

We have continued to grow our social media footprint to link to, highlight and showcase information valuable to our membership. Remember to follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

2020 Virtual Conference

As our joint ISANA (NZ and Australia) Conference had to be postponed to 2021, we took the decision to run a virtual 'on air' Conference on the 3-4 & 8-9 December 2020. I want to especially thank Sharon Cook for picking up the Conference Convenor role at extreme short notice and for pulling together a program under the theme of *Turning Challenges into Opportunities* which will be relevant and helpful to us all at this time.

In wrapping up, I want to thank and acknowledge the ongoing work provided by the ISANA Secretariat, led by Phoebe Thiessen and based in Hobart. Over the past 12 months Phoebe and her team, on top of their normal administrative tasks, worked additional hours to support the NCT, ESOS for Students and the many online Professional Development sessions. Her support, knowledge and skills have been a major strength for the National Council and to ISANA members.

I feel it is more important than ever that an organisation such as ISANA continues to thrive and support its members. We all continue to face ongoing challenges but having seen the many amazing programs, support and ideas that have been put in place at such short notice over the last few months, I am confident that our members will continue to work within their organisations and with the community to assist our international students and each other.

Bronwyn Gilson
National President

VICE PRESIDENTS' REPORT

Vice President

I began my tenure as National Vice-President in December 2019, what a time to commence in a sector that have been through so much change in the last 10 months. However, I would like to commend the State and National Leadership teams for their enduring commitment to the sector, our members and the resilience to pivot to meet the environment. My role is one where I am a sponge to observe and absorb the processes and policies and assist wherever is needed.

This year, as we all know has not been like any other, however this fundamentals of collaboration and governance, along with the spirit of #InThisTogether, it has been my privilege to lead the curation of a the Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) with Council of International Students Australia (CISA) and International Education Association of Australia (IEAA). As together in partnership, an enhanced offering of activities of both organisations through, sharing of knowledge and expertise, overall cooperation between education institutions in Australia; will support the professional development of international education professionals, scholars and students in Australia. Promoting and striving for a positive and holistic approach to international education in Australia.

Sarah Lisle
Vice President

Vice President - Professional Development

Professional Development in 2020 has taken on a completely new focus ISANA has had to adapt and be flexible with its delivery of professional training for our members and International Community Whereas ISANA traditionally offers face to face training and networking opportunities, 2020 saw the introduction of Zoom workshops. The year will be concluded with a Virtual online Conference in the first week of December.

We all look forward not only to the return of International students returning to our shores in 2021 but the prospect of Face to face training engagement and catching up with our ISANA colleagues.

We will also revive our external training program offering workshops to institutes on a National scale and developing resources for our members to enhance career opportunities, enabling them to remain linked to the International Education sector and share their knowledge and experience.

2021 will be a year of connection, reflection and collaboration and I look forward to the new challenges that we as experienced International educators face in the everchanging environment.

Finally, a huge thank you to the National Committee and ISANA secretariat for their unwavering support during a difficult year. The secretariat has been flexible and always accommodating to our needs and have implemented new technology to improve the training experience for our members. When we emerge from the other side of this crisis ISANA as an Association will be a leading force in

providing support, expertise, and knowledge to the sector and those involved in the delivery of Education.

Many thanks and all the best for 2021.

A summary of the workshops provided by ISANA for the 2019-2020 FY:

October 2019

11 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-sanity-branch-state-conference-2019/>

11 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-activesw-branch-supporting-and-welfare-monitoring-of-under-18-international-students/>

18 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-vic-tas-branch-mental-health-social-support/>

23 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-sanity-branch-suicide-prevention-workshop/>

November

1 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-vic-tas-branch-wellbeing-101-we-are-what-we-eat-we-become-what-we-think-about-agm/>

4 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-activesw-branch-understanding-the-esos-legislative-framework-2/>

8 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-queensland-brand-agm-including-end-of-year-networking-drinks/>

21 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-activesw-branch-agm-including-end-of-year-networking-drinks/>

December

3 – 6 National Conference <http://isana.proceedings.com.au/2019-conference-proceedings>

February

21 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/national-code-empowering-international-students/>

March

19 - postponed <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-qld-branch-legal-practical-response-to-child-abuse-workshop/>

May

21- <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-queensland-branch-industry-check-in/>

25 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-activesw-branch-virtual-student-support-free-tools-and-basic-training-2/>

27 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-sanity-branch-connect-be-well-share-tools/>

27 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-vic-tas-branch-check-in/>

June

4 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-activesw-branch-nsw-government-supporting-international-students-through-covid-19/>

12 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-activesw-branch-self-care-and-de-stress-advice-for-you-and-your-team/>

18 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-activesw-branch-self-care-and-de-stress-advice-for-your-students/>

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- 24 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-national-the-national-code-tutorial-nct/>
25 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-activesw-branch-industry-check-in/>

July

- 2 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-queensland-branch-child-protection-training/>
2 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/keeping-students-connected-and-supported-during-covid-19/>
9 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-activesw-branch-intercultural-communications-online-ways-to-engage-in-a-culturally-inclusive-manner-when-online/>
14 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/mental-wellbeing-and-resilience-online-workshop-1-for-staff/>
16 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-activesw-branch-industry-check-in-information-for-impact-a-discussion-on-report-findings/>
28 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-austrade-mental-wellbeing-and-resilience-online-workshop-2-for-onshore-students/>

August

- 4 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-austrade-mental-wellbeing-and-resilience-online-workshop-3-for-onshore-students/>
7 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-self-care-for-ie-professionals-are-u-ok/>
12 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-professional-development-networking-under-18/>
21 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-activesw-branch-industry-understanding-information-behaviours-of-international-students-in-crisis/>
28 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/isana-esos-for-students-virtual-launch/>

September 2020

- 23 - <http://www.isana.org.au/event/assumptions-realities-reset/>

Samantha Hilbig

Vice President – Professional Development

Vice President - Planning and Development

After many years of working outside of the international education sector, it has been a wonderful time for me to involve myself with ISANA again in 2020.

While it has been a challenging year of being quite distant from the branch and members, I have been engaged with ISANA national activities, council meetings and have further plans for my involvement to become more useful in 2021.

Activities I have undertaken:

1. Attended Austrade meetings – on a regular basis with other council members to engage and develop ISANA's ongoing relationship with Austrade – contributed to discussions around workshops, publications, and promotional material.
2. CISA Racism Roundtable – represented ISANA at a virtual roundtable on the broad range of racism experienced by international students across Australia leading up to and during the pandemic, discussion around the impact on students and programs/projects that have been developed to assist impacted students throughout the international education sector.

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3. Commenced review of the ISANA constitution but put on hold this year due to COVID-19 and other priorities – will recommence this work in 2021.
 4. ISANA Online Conference – I have assisted with convening the ISANA online national conference a four-day event in early December 2020. This is being held in place of the National Conference in New Zealand. Thank you to all who have been assisting with getting this up and running.

Sharon Cook

Vice President – Planning and Development

TREASURER'S REPORT

Despite the restrictions of Covid-19, ISANA was able to offer a range of activities that maintained its revenue stream in a difficult year. The Consumer Protection and the National Code: Empowering International Students project, funded under Study Melbourne's International Student Welfare Program was successfully concluded in August, with final payment being received in September. ISANA opened this financial year with \$98,808.

Total revenue for 2020, including project grant funding, was \$221,252. Demand for the National Code Tutorial launched mid-year and the Under 18 Masterclasses run in partnership with IEAA helped to offset a decline in membership due to financial constraints caused by Covid-19. There was also a healthy profit of \$17,291 from last year's Annual Conference in Melbourne. It should be noted that to assist staff working in international education, State Branch professional development activities were offered for free. After deducting all costs associated with Professional Development, ISANA had a Gross Profit of \$71,559 from its revenue-generating activities, resulting in a net profit of \$1,487.

ISANA ended the 2019-2020 financial year with net assets of \$100,295. The audited financial statement is attached.

In closing, I again extend my thanks and very great appreciation to Phoebe Thiessen for her invaluable support in streamlining and overseeing the administration of the ISANA accounts. In addition to her normal demanding workload, she and her team dedicated many hours to developing a Student Zone on the ISANA website to hold the ESOS for Students resources.

Molly Bonnefin
National Treasurer

BRANCH REPORTS

ACTiveNSW

2020 has reviled itself as a challenging year in many aspects. COVID-19 pandemic within weeks led to the unprecedented crisis and severely impacted the economy, including the higher education sector. The consequences will be felt way into the future. ACTiveNSW branch of ISANA is committed to supporting our members and stakeholders to ensure they can continue constructing the post-pandemic world.

In 2020 ACTiveNSW Branch organised several professional development/industry check-in sessions:

- Initiatives to support international students during COVID-19 – a conversation with the NSW Government and City of Sydney
- Looking at the recovery strategies for international education, a discussion on approaches to support international students and renewal of the sector with Bronwyn Gilson, **ISANA's National President**
- Self-care and de-stress advice for your students
- Keeping students connected and supported during COVID-19 – a conversation with CISA and ISLA
- Intercultural Communications Online: ways to engage in a culturally inclusive manner when online
- Information for Impact – a discussion on report findings
 - international student exploitation in accommodation & work exploitation plus information from key service providers
 - Living Precariously: International Students' Housing Experiences in Australia
- Understanding Information Behaviours of International Students in Crisis

ACTiveNSW Branch got involved with government and non-government student support groups. We actively promoted initiatives for international students and the education sector in general, such as AUSTRADE, StudyNSW, and the City of Sydney.

- ACTiveNSW branch took an active part in
- NSW Interagency Accommodation working group
- Consortium for International Students working group
- International Student Project working group
- Oz International Students Chapter
- Sydney Alliance

Supported applications for:

- International Students and Scams - Police and students come together for impact
- COVID19 International student case management project: International Student Outreach (ISO) Project

In the planning for the future, we would like to encourage all members to have your say about the pandemic experience. The impact of COVID19 on you and your institution is vital for formulating the industry recovery strategy. We will be able to do it by working in partnership with members and

stakeholder organisations, including international students, government, business, and community groups. Together we can create a strategy for the post-pandemic world.

Annette Kalczyńska
ACTiveNSW Branch President

QUEENSLAND

What a Year??

Here in QLD, we started the year on a positive note by creating our Professional Development calendar offering a variety of training and networking opportunities.

We recruited a full committee which included roles representing each sector of International education to present a balanced approach to our training and member base.

How things changed from our first Committee meeting back at the Melbourne conference over breakfast to complete lock down in March and the closures of the International Borders due to COVID-19.

In this report I have asked our Committee to reflect on 2020 and what they look forward to in 2021.

Louise Myers JCU and ISANA QLD Branch Regional Rep:

“North QLD has assisted International students during COVID with the implementation of Food Pantries established in March 2020 and continuing to present. Provision of basic grocery needs for international students funded partly by financial donations from JCU staff, Study Qld Meals for Mates program, St Vincent de Paul and SSAF. The pantry has supported over 170 students who were impacted by job losses because of the covid-19 restrictions.”

Kiri Bishop ISANA QLD Branch Professional Development:

“Queensland has been positioned well with such a low level of COVID cases that it has allowed the providers to resume on-campus delivery of classes and engagement which can be reported as a positive direction in returning to a sense of safety. This is an example of how students have continued to receive quality in their education and experience.

Ongoing welfare issues are being proactively addressed through education providers, Study Queensland and other community agencies, however managing student self-perception of welfare, and appetite for difficulty post-crisis is the theme in which our approach in encouraging students to build momentum and maintain positivity in their learning.

ISANA will continue to collaborate across the network to ensure members are supported through the changes of environment, both in restructures and in continuity of strong student support. Students that are suffering with financial, medical or mental health related concerns due to COVID will continue to rely on the quality of care provided by this network and existing relationships between schools and community will continue to be tested to stand up to the challenges post-COVID. “

Emma Dawson UQ ISANA QLD Branch Secretary:

“2020 has been a challenging year for so many of us, in fact, it would be fair to say that the continued impact of the COVID-19 brings many unknowns. Through my work at The University of Queensland, 2020 has been a valuable reflective exercise to review our current support programs and look for new initiatives to engage with our international student cohorts, through a range of different avenues, as we, and they, navigate the new norm. “

ISANA plays a profound role in helping to solve the big challenges before us. As institutions we continuously challenge norms, rigorously debate the issues, and enrich the communities in which we are embedded. As we look forward to 2021, I would love for ISANA QLD to refocus and harvest the