



Dear ,

Welcome to Our First Newsletter of 2025!

We're excited to kick off the year with our first newsletter, bringing you the latest updates from ISANA. In this edition, you'll find:

1. **A word from the President** – reflections and priorities for the year ahead
2. **ISANA 2025 Conference** – stay tuned! More details will be announced soon
3. **ISANA Digital and Social Media Channels** – stay connected and follow us for the latest updates and community discussions
4. **Professional Development News** – upcoming opportunities to support your growth and engagement in the sector
5. **ISANA 2024 Conference** – insights and highlights from our last event
6. **Stay Connected & Engaged!** - ISANA remains committed to supporting you

A word from the President

The 2024 international education policy landscape was a turbulent ride, creating uncertainty across the industry. Key changes included higher financial and English language requirements for international students, increased visa costs, stricter visa

assessment processes, and modifications to post-study work rights, culminating in the replacement of MD107 with MD111 at the end of the year.

While much of the industry's focus was on recruitment and marketing, the student services sector received less attention in broader sector analysis. ISANA remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting professionals in higher education through ongoing professional development, ensuring best practices continue to evolve. Our professional development calendar, regularly updated with new offerings, is available on our website for both members and non-members.

ISANA 2025 Conference

Specific details regarding the location and theme of the 35th ISANA Conference have not been officially announced; we will be sure to inform you as soon as possible.

In the meantime, ISANA has outlined a series of professional development events for 2025, which may provide insights into our focus for the year. These events include topics such as supporting student mental health, understanding the ESOS framework, and enhancing communication in multicultural contexts. Visit the PD Calendar on the ISANA website for more information, <https://isana.org.au/isana-2025-professional-development/>

ISANA Digital and Social Media Channels

Subscribing to ISANA's Conference mailing list <https://isanaconference.com/>, or following our official social media channels can provide timely updates about professional development and the conference as they become available.


- ISANA Website: <https://isana.org.au/>
- SANA Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ISANA.international>
- ISANA LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/isana-international-education-association-inc/>

Stay connected, and we look forward to another year of collaboration and learning!

Professional Development News

ISANA is committed to supporting Members with valuable professional development opportunities. Members can access slides, recordings, and additional materials from each event when available.


Upcoming Sessions - <https://isana.org.au/isana-2025-professional-development/>:

 27 February | 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM AEDT | Online via Zoom

International Education Essentials: Empowering Students and Staff with ISANA


Resources

Presenters: Molly Bonnefin & Bronwyn Gilson

 20 March | 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM AEDT | Online via Zoom

From Firefighting to Firm Foundations: Sustainable Practices in Student Support

Presenter: Lucy Blakemore

 9 April | 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM AEST | Online via Zoom


Understanding ESOS – Managing Student Success

Presenters: IEP Advisory

 1 May | 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM AEST | Online via Zoom

Foundations of Student Advising

Presenter: Desma Smith

 21 May | 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM AEST | Online via Zoom


Redefining the Student Journey: How AI is Revolutionizing Pre-Departure Engagement

Presenter: Bosco Anthony

 12 June | 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM AEST | Online via Zoom


Bridging Cultures: Enhancing Communication and Understanding in Multicultural Contexts

Presenter: Piotr Jusik


 29 July | 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM AEST | Online via Zoom

Empowering Educators and Advisors: Enhancing Readiness to Support Student Mental Health


Presenter: Anna Dabrowski

 August 2025 | Online via Zoom

IEAA and ISANA U18 Masterclass

 September 2025 | Online via Zoom


TBC

 October 2025 | Online via Zoom

TBC

 November 2025 | Online via Zoom / In-Person

AGMs and In-Person Networking Events (Hosted by National & Branches)

 December 2025

TBC

Stay engaged, enhance your skills, and connect with peers through ISANA's professional development events!

ISANA 2024 Conference

Firstly, I would like to extend a very big **THANK YOU to our sponsors**; their support was crucial in delivering a very successful conference program and richer experience for attendees.

- Study Adelaide <https://studyadelaide.com/>
- Business Events Adelaide <https://www.businesseventsadelaide.com.au/>
- GRG <https://globalrevgen.com/about-grg/>
- Voyage <https://myvoyage.io/app/aboutus>
- AHN Australian Homestay Network <https://www.homestaynetwork.org/>
- Medibank Live Better <https://www.medibank.com.au/livebetter/>
- *toefl. <https://www.ets.org/toefl..html>
- SAA Student Accommodation Association <https://studentaccassoc.com.au/>

Also, a big thank you to our media partner, the KOALA International Education News <https://thekoalanews.com/>

1. <https://thekoalanews.com/isana-conference-day-1/>
2. <https://thekoalanews.com/isana-conference-day-2/>

Taking place on December 3 - 5, 2024, at the Adelaide Convention Centre in South Australia, the 34th ISANA Conference reinforced the importance of innovation, student support, and community-driven initiatives, aligning with the theme *“Freshen Up Your Toolkit to Support International Students and Refresh Yourself.”* The conference aimed to rejuvenate approaches to supporting international students while promoting professional self-care among practitioners. With so many valuable sessions to choose from, I'm sure attendees found it challenging to decide where to be. I often wished I could be in multiple places at once to absorb all the incredible insights, programs, and initiatives being shared.

The conference kicked off on **Tuesday**, December 3, with an optional Adelaide City Discovery Walking Tour, providing delegates with a chance to explore the city's tree-lined

CBD while connecting with peers. The day concluded with a Welcome Reception at the Verandah Bar, Strathmore Hotel, fostering an atmosphere of networking and engagement.

Wednesday saw the first official day set the stage for deep discussions, collaboration, and innovation in international student support.

The day commenced with a Welcome to Country by Robert Taylor from Kuma Kaaru Cultural Services, followed by opening remarks from Professor Jess Gallagher, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (External Engagement) at the University of Adelaide, and an address by Hon. Joe Szakacs MP, Minister for Trade and Investment.

The next session, a panel discussion, *Government Policy Changes – Where to from here?* was moderated by Bronwyn Gilson, ISANA Vice President and featured insights from industry leaders:

- Phil Honeywood (CEO, International Education Association of Australia)
- Jane Johnston (Chief Executive, Study Adelaide)
- James Martin (Managing Director, Insider)

The panel explored the impact of recent policy changes on international education and the future of student support.

The day featured diverse sessions, offering valuable insights into student accommodation, orientation programs, and professional development for international student practitioners:

✅ Accommodation & Student Support:

- Homestay partnerships as a tool for improving student visa approvals
- Building student accommodation capacity through collaborative partnerships
- The importance of professionalizing student support roles

✅ Pre-Departure & Orientation Innovations:

- AI-driven pre-departure engagement
- Using storytelling for impactful student transitions
- Building community between international and domestic students

✅ Mental Health, Student Advisory & Scam Prevention: Special Interest Groups explored best practices for supporting students in key areas such as:

- Mental health and counselling services
- International student advisory
- Under-18 student support

The day concluded with a vibrant *Tropical Islands* themed Conference Dinner at the National Wine Centre, with attendees embracing the theme, enjoying a night of networking, entertainment, and celebration.

Key takeaways from day 1

- ✓ Government policy changes continue to shape international student experiences
- ✓ Accommodation strategies are evolving through homestay and institutional partnerships
- ✓ Pre-departure and orientation programs are being transformed by AI, storytelling, and engagement initiatives
- ✓ Mental health, scam prevention, and advisory services remain critical focus areas

This dynamic and engaging first day reinforced the conference theme, "*Freshen Up Your Toolkit to Support International Students and Refresh Yourself*," laying the groundwork for meaningful discussions and future collaboration.

Thursday began with a warm welcome from Shawna Hooton and Andres Villamizar, setting the tone for a day filled with insightful discussions and knowledge sharing.

The Keynote Address, *A Wild New Way of Working*, delivered by Dr. Gemma Munro, explored innovative and transformative approaches to workplace culture and leadership.

Then followed the student panel discussion, moderated by Andres Villamizar, featuring students from Torrens University, Kaplan Business School, and The University of Adelaide, offering their valuable perspectives on their experiences in international education in Australia.

The final morning session was the panel discussion on Hybrid Student Services featuring experts from Austrade, nib Group, CQUniversity, and ISANA examining the opportunities and challenges of hybrid service models, emphasizing the need for adaptability in student support.

The ISANA AGM was held during lunch, this provided an update on ISANA's initiatives and future directions.

Breakout Sessions Parallel sessions in the afternoon focused on mental health, student engagement, employability, and younger student support, addressing critical areas for international student success:

✔ Mental Health & Wellbeing

- Digital strategies to aid suicide prevention
- Holistic scholarship support
- Co-designing health messaging.

✔ Engagement & Community Building

- Co-curricular strategies
- Tailored grants
- Launching social programs to enhance student belonging.

✔ Employability & Career Development

- Study Adelaide's Job Shop
- Regional career success programs
- Peer leadership development for international students

✔ Younger Student Support:

- U18 guardianship programs
- Peer mentoring for younger students
- Decision-making confidence-building


The conference concluded with an exploration of modern slavery awareness in universities, followed by a closing session led by Shawna Hooton and Andres Villamizar, wrapping up two days of enriching discussions, collaboration, and networking.


It is fair to say that the 34th ISANA Conference reinforced the importance of innovation, student support, and community-driven initiatives, aligning with its theme *“Freshen Up Your Toolkit to Support International Students and Refresh Yourself.”*


Stay Connected & Engaged!

As we navigate the evolving landscape of international education, ISANA remains committed to supporting you with professional development, advocacy, and networking

opportunities. We encourage you to stay engaged, share your insights, and take advantage of the resources available to you.

 Stay updated by visiting our website and following us on social media.

 Check out our professional development calendar for upcoming sessions.

 We'd love to hear from you! If you have any suggestions or stories to share, reach out to me at president@isana.org.au or the ISANA Office, isana@isana.org.au.

Thank you for being a part of the ISANA community, your dedication and passion make a real difference in the lives of international students.

Until next time, take care and stay inspired!

Warm regards,

Annette Kalczynska
ISANA National President
president@isana.org.au

ISANA Office Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, 10.30am – 4pm.



 **Resilient Futures:
Leading Through Transformation**
Save the Date – Join Us at The Metropolis Melbourne
35th ISANA Conference 8 – 9 September 2026
Be part of Australia's leading international education conference.