



Media Release

Senator Mathias Cormann *Shadow Minister for Employment Participation, Apprenticeships and Training*

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Government procrastination costs overseas students

The collapse of yet another major private training college comes as the Rudd Labor Government has been dragging its feet on legislation currently before Parliament to deal with these issues.

Senator Cormann's statements come after a major English training centre with about 2,300 overseas students has had to close down.

"Legislation to improve the quality of education services for overseas students in Australia has been lingering in Parliament since August last year," Senator Cormann said.

"Julia Gillard introduced amendments to the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000* into Parliament two days before announcing her highly publicised visit to India.

"In India, so she told us all at the time, she would be discussing 'recent moves' by the Rudd Labor government 'to improve the quality of education for overseas students in Australia, including the re-registration of education providers'.

"This was all part of her spin and PR strategy in the lead-up to that overseas visit. She wanted to be seen to be 'doing something'. Since then nothing - yet again all talk and no action," he said.

"We will support the legislation when it is finally brought on in the Senate as a reasonable first step, even though we do not think it is as well targeted as it could and should be.

"That's why we will be moving a number of amendments for example to ensure proper risk-management principles are applied when prioritising education providers for re-registration.

"The international student market in Australia is worth \$15.5 billion in export income and is our third largest export earner.

"Successive closures of training colleges in 2009 and a series of other related issues have contributed to a loss of confidence in our international education services.

"Sadly, 2010 has started with further dislocation, anguish and financial pain for more than 2,000 overseas students studying in Australia.

"These problems are damaging our reputation as a high-quality provider of training services for overseas students. It is time the Rudd government matched its talk with action and started to sort out some of these issues," Senator Cormann said

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