

## Collaborating to support safe, secure, and sustainable internationalisation

		
		

*On Dec. 14, 2021, ACE, alongside its counterpart associations in Australia, Canada, Germany, the UK, and New Zealand published this joint statement, which sets out how the organizations plan to work together on supporting safe, secure and sustainable internationalization. The six organizations have been meeting as part of a regular dialogue, sharing insights and experiences on issues such as security and risk in international collaboration, and the impact of COVID-19. This statement sets out a number of shared objectives, and provides a framework for our ongoing collaboration.*

### Statement of intent

As the major, convening higher education associations in our respective countries, we share a belief in the positive value that higher education and international cooperation delivers for our member institutions, for our students and academic faculty, and for the communities we serve.

That belief derives from our commitment to shared values, including academic freedom, freedom of expression and the autonomy of researchers and institutions to develop collaborations.

In this context, our organisations work together to support and promote internationalisation. This includes acknowledging the value of Indigenous knowledges in our research approaches and systems, welcoming international students, encouraging study abroad and research collaborations, and partnering with institutions across the globe.

At the same time, we recognise that international collaborations may carry risk, and sometimes raise legitimate national security considerations. We are committed to engaging with and responding to such concerns on behalf of, and in concert with, our member institutions.

To this end, our organisations will partner to better understand how to address these concerns and challenges and to share best practice, while remaining committed to helping our member institutions to realise the opportunities related to internationalisation.

**We will work towards:**

- 1) **Individually and collectively making the positive case for safe, secure, and sustainable internationalisation in higher education – and the value this brings to higher education, research, and the wider communities that host our institutions.**
  - a) Incorporating positive messages on the value and importance of safe, secure and sustainable internationalisation into our public, governments and sector-facing communications.
  - b) Openly discussing and articulating the potential challenges related to internationalisation, concerns regarding foreign influence and interference, and the steps being taken by universities to address these.
  - c) Where appropriate, advocating in favour of safe, secure and sustainable internationalisation with our domestic governments, funding agencies and other stakeholder communities.
  
- 2) **Sharing experience and insights between signatory organisations and our respective memberships, to help inform the development of policy and practice regarding internationalisation in higher education in our domestic systems.**
  - a) Meeting as a group on a regular basis.
  - b) Maintaining a descriptive log of relevant guidance and regulation across our systems.
  - c) Providing platforms at our individual conferences and events for representatives from the signatory organisations.
  - d) Facilitating the exchange of expertise, experience, and good practice among senior leaders and professional communities (in bi- and multi-lateral forums).
  
- 3) **Supporting appropriate and proportionate action within our systems to promote and support safe, secure, and sustainable internationalisation of our respective research and education enterprises.**
  - a) Playing an active and constructive role in shaping the regulatory and operating environment as it relates to security and risk in internationalisation.
  - b) Engaging in an active and ongoing dialogue with our domestic governments, funding, and security agencies, to help ensure that policy makers and universities have an informed understanding of critical and emerging issues.
  - c) Providing information, advice, and guidance on issues of interest for our member institutions.
  - d) Hosting forums for our member institutions that support and promote the exchange of insights and best practice.
  
- 4) **Actively seeking opportunities to enhance research and higher education cooperation between the institutions we represent.**
  - a) Exploring the potential for joint initiatives, including the development of common policy positions and principles in areas of mutual interest.
  - b) Engaging with multilateral approaches to security and risk in internationalisation.