

## About the International Education Council

The International Education Council (IEC) is a non-profit association based in Washington D.C. IEC closely tracks the issues and policies affecting international education, specifically those dealing with student financial aid. IEC communicates with and works with policy makers on issues regarding U.S. financial aid programs on behalf of its members, the international colleges and universities enrolling U.S. students.

Many American students depend on student loans to finance their education, and each year, thousands make use of this financial aid to study for degrees at colleges and universities around the world. Since 2003, the International Education Council (IEC) has been representing and assisting institutions of higher education outside of the United States that wish to participate in the U.S. federally supported student loan program. IEC's experts understand how the policies and actions of the U.S. government affect international higher education, especially policies on student financial assistance.

IEC dedicates itself to ensuring that student loan programs continue to be available to U.S. students who need them to finance their international educations. By providing international colleges and universities a focused and united voice on financial aid policy, IEC aids these institutions in administering and expanding the financial resources that are essential to recruiting and enrolling students from the United States in degree programs.

If you enrol American students who need US federal student loans, membership in IEC is essential. Join IEC to ensure that your voice is heard. For more information, please contact Executive Director Harrison Wadsworth at [hwadsworth@bosepublicaffairs.com](mailto:hwadsworth@bosepublicaffairs.com) or at +1-202-349-2303.

## Who are we?

IEC is governed by a Board of Directors representing higher education institutions from around the globe and key partners in financial aid for study abroad:

Cara Piperni, McGill University, Canada (President)

Nicola Cooper-Harvey, Oxford University, United Kingdom

Peter Nealon, Atlantic Bridge Program, USA

Philip Ramge, London Film School, UK

Glenn Ruane, London School of Economics and Political Science, UK

Amy Rutherford, Education New Zealand

Felicia Tesoriero, University of Sydney, Australia

Kenny Winser, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

Harrison Wadsworth (Executive Director and Secretary), USA

## Accomplishments for our member institutions in recent years

- Helped them remain or become eligible to participate in the US Direct Loan Program by providing individualized information on US Department of Education (USDOE) regulations and numerous other requirements.
- Worked constantly with the USDOE on institutional eligibility and regulatory compliance, acting as a communications bridge and advocate for IEC members.
- Convinced the USDOE to exempt foreign institutions from list of regulations that would have led to US government oversight of the relationships universities have with their banks. Thanks to IEC's detailed comments in person and in writing, these "cash management" regulations of July 2016 apply only to US institutions.
- Convinced the USDOE to greatly reduce the burdensome and nonsensical long list of "consumer disclosures" required to be created and publicly posted. Instead, institutions only need to post information that is actually useful to students' for their studies and management of their finances.
- Progressed a longstanding, important IEC priority: to allow students receiving U.S. loans to study part of their program in the United States or at institutions outside the U.S. that are not themselves participating in the U.S. Direct Loan Program. Regulations proposed by the USDOE will modify the "written arrangements" in order to allow students to take up to 25 percent of their program of study at such institutions without losing eligibility for Direct Loans.
- Convinced the US Congress to change the law in order to:
  - Permit Veterinary Schools to regain eligibility to the Direct Loan Program. Congress, at IEC's request, passed a special law to do this.
  - Ease the requirement that colleges prepare audited financial statements according to US GAAP (accounting principles) from those with US\$500,000 or more in annual loan volume to those with at least \$3 million. (Note: This requirement was actually removed altogether from the law but the Department of Education on its own authority partially re-instated it.)
  - Remove unworkable requirements that campuses report crimes in their vicinity on their websites.
  - Ensured that Congress wrote a special section for foreign institutions to participate in the U.S. Direct Loan Program when it repealed the FFEL Program in 2010 and worked with USDOE on implementation.
  - Intervened with the USDOE and other agencies to restore Direct Loan eligibility to specialty arts-oriented institutions in the United Kingdom.
  - Participated in formal negotiating sessions at USDOE to represent IEC members. IEC successfully argued against USDOE setting admissions standards for international universities and medical schools, for example.
- Arranged for Annual Conferences in Washington, DC and Europe where policy information and training is provided. The U.S. Government has participated significantly in providing training.
- Made detailed recommendations to improve the Foreign School Handbook, most of which were incorporated in the second update of the Handbook.

## What we're working on now

The Higher Education Act (HEA), the law that contains the U.S. Direct Loan Program, is up for review and renewal. IEC has already weighed in many times with the U.S. Congress and with senior officials at the Department of Education to advocate for IEC member priorities. It will continue to do so until the process is complete and new regulations are written.

- **In General:** calling for relief from the excessive regulatory burden on foreign institutions that must devote many resources on complying with US regulations for the benefit of relatively few eligible students.
- IEC testified in person and submitted written comments to the Department of Education calling for regulatory changes to address the issues below.
- **Written Arrangements:** requesting a portion of a student's program of study be allowed at an ineligible foreign school, allowing for valuable opportunities such as exchanges despite host schools choosing not to participate in the US loan program.
- **US GAAP Financial Statements:** building on previous work by advocating for recognition of generally accepted international auditing standards by the US Department of Education for all institutions, saving large sums.
- **Foreign Public and Private, Non-Profit, Auditing Deadlines:** Treat foreign public and private, non-profit, institutions the same as U.S. institutions, which require submission of audited financial statements and compliance audits no later than nine months after the close of the institution's fiscal year. Presently, all foreign institutions have to submit their audits within six months.
- **Medical School requirements:** requesting a major modification or elimination of the passage rate requirement for foreign medical schools with relatively small numbers of American students and related reforms to reduce regulatory burdens.
- **Nursing schools:** advocating for a technical correction to US law needed to re-instate nursing schools forced out of the US loan programs.
- **Distance education:** requesting a correction to the law to permit a portion of a student's academic program to be taught using online technologies.
- **Gainful employment:** requesting an exemption for qualified foreign schools from gainful employment reporting requirements.
- We are constantly working with the Department of Education's various offices on behalf of IEC members, acting as a go-between and helping resolve problems in complying with the regulations as they arise.

## Member Benefits

### ADVOCACY

IEC is the only organization that talks to the US Congress and the Department of Education on behalf of public and private, non-profit international colleges and universities that enrol American students. IEC works with NAFSA, but has a distinctly different, unique focus on the U.S. financial aid that most Americans need to enrol in degree programs.



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**DEDICATED ONLINE RESOURCE AREA**

Members can view previous editions of IEC newsletters, alerts and key information from conferences and training sessions through a dedicated, password-protected section of the IEC website. The site will offer opportunities to join “practice communities” to share theme-based information and updates among members.

### **NEWSLETTER AND ALERTS**

Members receive an email newsletter published twice a month, as well as the latest policy updates and alerts relevant to financial aid for their US students. They are the first to know about important changes, and IEC gets straight to the key information members need.

### **CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS**

IEC holds an annual membership conference and workshop to provide an opportunity for members to learn about key issues affecting the financing of international education, the latest developments as Congress and the USDOE consider changes that affect IEC members, and to interact with financial aid professionals from around the globe.

Regular training events take place both in Washington DC, to maximise the opportunity to interact with the Department of Education and other U.S.-based experts, and at international locations. As a member, you benefit from discounted rates to these invaluable events and the opportunity to help set the agenda. IEC events complement and build on training offered directly by the U.S. Department of Education, such as the annual Federal Student Aid Conference, ensuring a dedicated focus on “foreign school” topics.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

One of IEC's goals is to enhance the image of the membership by informing the public of their stories. IEC accomplishes this by issuing press releases about significant events, and providing the education media world with informational materials.

### **GRASSROOTS**

Campaigns are conducted to inform policy makers and the media as a particular issue arises which affects our members. Working with IEC, you can be assured that a coordinated, unified message will be sent.

## **Membership**

IEC membership pools resources, providing a cost-effective means of staying on top of changing policies and conditions that affect international education. Membership also provides a way for member institutions to coordinate approaches to issues and communicate to the U.S. government with consistent messages, resulting in advancement of their interests. IEC membership is a small investment towards producing positive change that no one member institution could do or could afford to do on its own.

With the Higher Education Act requiring reauthorization and with the Department of Education undertaking extensive regulatory reform initiatives, the time has never been more critical to join IEC in order to strengthen our collective voice.

Annual dues are payable via cheque, wire or credit card in U.S. Dollars. Dues for institutions of higher education are based on total annual U.S. Direct Loan volume:

Direct Loan volume of more than \$US1,000,000: \$3,000

\$500,000-\$1,000,000: \$2,000

Less than \$500,000: \$500.

Associate Members (Organizations that are not Institutions of higher education): \$5,000