

Warning to international students: Overseas Students Association

The NSW Government and the international education sector have issued a warning to international students in relation to the activities of the Overseas Students Association (OSA), a subsidiary of the National Liaison Committee (NLC).

The OSA purports to be the national peak body for international students in Australia. However, its practices raise serious concerns.

The NSW Government, education providers, industry peak bodies and international student organisations do not support the OSA and NLC and they are not recognised as bodies representing international students in NSW.

International students are advised of the following:

- The Council of International Students Australia (CISA) is recognised as the representative body for international students in NSW. CISA is in no way associated with the OSA and NLC.
- CISA has received numerous reports from students who allege they have been harassed and intimidated by OSA representatives.
- The NLC and OSA do not have the support of any NSW university or their student associations. The use of NSW universities' logos on the OSA website is not approved and infringes trademark rights.
- The collection of student visa and passport information on NSW university campuses to obtain the OSA Safety Card is strongly discouraged, and in most cases prohibited.

- The OSA Safety Card is promoted on the OSA website as a program that supports international students who experience a threat to their safety. Holding an OSA Safety Card does not deliver any immediate additional benefits for international students when dealing with NSW Police. International students should ring Police directly to report crimes and if it is urgent, call 000.
- Students concerned about requests for visa or passport information should report their concerns immediately to their international student support centre.
- The OSA website carries the NSW Government logo without approval. This infringes the Government's trademark rights and implies that the OSA Safety Card is endorsed by the NSW Government. The NSW Government does not provide any support, either financial or in-kind, to the OSA.
- The OSA website carries false information about discounts for OSA Safety Card holders to NSW cultural institutions. The Art Gallery of NSW, the Powerhouse Museum, the Australian Museum and Sydney Living Museum expressly refused requests from the OSA for these discounts and therefore they are not available to Safety Card holders.
- NSW Fair Trading is carrying out a comprehensive investigation into this and other possible breaches of Australian consumer laws by the OSA.

Any international student seeking assistance should contact their education provider or CISA - secretariat@cisa.edu.au.

This statement is issued and supported by the following organisations:

Council of International Students Australia	NSW Government
National Union of Students	NSW Police Force
University of Sydney	NSW Department of Education and Communities
University of New South Wales	Powerhouse Museum
University of Technology, Sydney	Australian Museum
University of Western Sydney	Historic Houses Trust
University of Wollongong	Art Gallery of NSW
University of Newcastle	English Australia
University of New England	Australian Council of Private Education & Training
Macquarie University	Universities Australia
Charles Sturt University	Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations
Southern Cross University	ISANA
Australian Catholic University	International Education Association of Australia