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Connectivity – at the heart of international education

Can connectivity provide one global agent quality framework?

October 20, 2016

Mike Finnell, American International Recruitment Council



AIRC: A Grass Roots Effort To Enhance Marketplace Order



- AIRC founded in 2008 by U.S. higher education institutions
- Registered as a standards development organization with the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission
- AIRC members are accredited U.S. post-secondary institutions, pathway programs, and student recruitment agencies.
- Created and manages a rigorous peer reviewed accreditation process for agencies
- AIRC works to safeguard the interests of both international students and enrolling institutions through the promotion of ethical, standards based international recruitment strategies.
- AIRC members help shape certification standards and engage in oversight.

Certification Standards



40 AIRC Standards Cover 5 Operational Areas

These standards must be met in order for an agency to be certified

- Organizational effectiveness
- Integrity of the recruitment process
- Student and family engagement
- Student and institutional engagement
- Complaints process

AIRC Certification Process



- Certification based on a process modeled rigorously on higher education accreditation
- In country background check – criminal, civil, company and principals
- Self report
- Internal professional development
- On-site external review by Institutional Members
- Reference checking
- Validation by AIRC Commission - independent certification board
- Renewal after 5 years with annual reports and substantive change reporting
- Complaints process

AIRC Comments Process



- The public can comment on any certified agency or approved applicant
- Based on the comment, if the agency appears to be violating a standard, the AIRC Commission will investigate
- The outcome may include warning with re-visit to verify standards are being met; publicly announced probation period; or publicly announced revoking of certification

Global Connectivity?



- Only “American” standard is knowledge of US higher education – all other areas non US specific and adaptable to other countries.
- AIRC certification process extends already established standards with an enforcement regime managed by higher education institutions.
- Certification focused on the integrity of the agency as an entity, not on training of individual counselors
- Industry self-regulation vs. government.
- High costs can be lowered through growth and cooperation
- AIRC certification not required by all institutions – mixed incentive to obtain and maintain certification

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