

Group discussion session report:

### **Scholarships and the Commonwealth**

The background to the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) was explained, to place the CSC's role in context. It was emphasised that CSFP was multilateral not bilateral.

In general discussion, the benefits of Commonwealth Scholarships were summarised as providing opportunities to travel and experience diverse cultures, and to gain access to networks at international level, although there was acknowledgement that open learning had advantages in some circumstances.

There were conflicting views on whether the focus of Commonwealth Scholarships should be on development or leadership, and if the two are incompatible. It was generally agreed that the CSFP would lose something if countries such as New Zealand were not involved; the assumption that everyone in the developed world could afford to access overseas study was misleading.

Participants also discussed the interesting fact that the majority of the CSC's award holders came from and/or went on to work in the public sector; were we missing the chance to encourage entrepreneurship by not seeking applicants from the private sector? It was agreed that the number of private universities and medical institutions was growing at a considerable rate and that this factor was not reflected in the CSC's work.

