

14 September 2017

Mr David Wilden
First Assistant Secretary
Immigration and Citizenship Policy
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
6 Chan Street
BELCONNEN, ACT, 2617

Dear Mr Wilden

Swinburne University of Technology's submission to the Department of Immigration and Border Patrol visa simplification discussion paper

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Department of Immigration and Border Patrol (DIBP) visa simplification discussion paper. As a dual-sector university with a significant cohort of international students, Swinburne University considers the matters raised in DIBPs paper to be of vital importance to the students that we serve.

Swinburne understands that economic and social objectives must be balanced against national security concerns. We consider that a key objective of any visa system reform should be the encouragement of a knowledge economy, and the facilitation of movement of skilled people. Transparency and accessibility are also vital to ensure a fair and effective visa system.

Higher education, perhaps more than any other industry in Australia, employs a workforce that is truly global. Policy reform should ensure that there are not unnecessary barriers to the movement of academic staff between countries.

Pro Vice-Chancellor International

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Scope for reduction in the number of visas

Provisional residence requirements, heavy use of short-term visas and shaky pathways to permanent residency and citizenship can potentially place this recruitment effort and the attractiveness of Australia as a destination of choice for skilled migrants at risk.

Further, while Swinburne is pleased with many of the reforms to student visas made possible by the Simplified Student Visa Framework, we believe there is scope for a more effective whole of Government approach with respect to the calculation and application of risk ratings for international students.

Swinburne is proud to invest in fostering high-quality research collaboration and knowledge exchanges with international institutional partners. This includes supporting and sponsoring research students and scholars to come to Swinburne on a temporary basis to participate in research activities and projects.

While Swinburne is pleased to assist with the Government's stated intention of capacity building in certain 'high-risk' nations, we strongly believe that we should not be punished by way of an inflated risk rating for doing so. We therefore request consideration of a modified risk rating system which takes into account explanatory risk factors and balances conflicting priorities.

Thank you for your consideration of our submission. I would be pleased to discuss these matters further with you.

Yours sincerely

Professor Monica Kennedy
Pro Vice-Chancellor International