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## Universities commend Senate report on international student welfare

Universities Australia welcomes the recommendations arising from the report from the Senate Inquiry into International Student Welfare released yesterday.

“International students are integral and valued members of Australia's universities, and they are key to the nation's long-term engagement with our region,” Universities Australia Chief Executive, Dr Glenn Withers said today.

“Assuring the welfare of international students both on and off campus is a high priority for universities, and the Senate Committee's recommendations are fully consistent with Universities Australia's Ten Point Plan for enhancement of the international student experience, and our submissions to the Inquiry,” Dr Withers said.

Universities Australia supports the Committee's recommendations on ways to enhance compliance against existing standards for registration of Higher Education Providers.

“A rounded student experience requires attention to providing accurate information, orientation, cultural information, English language enhancement, integration into the campus and wider communities, and support with accommodation, employment and safety issues,” Dr Withers said.

“Securing the ongoing sustainability of Australia's international education industry and our reputation for quality are vital.

“Only providers with a demonstrated commitment to quality education and enhancement of the whole student experience should be able to register or re-register to provide courses to international students,” Dr Withers said.

Universities Australia especially commends the Committee's recommendations concerning travel concessions for international students across all states and territories.

“It is very important that travel concessions be immediately available to all international students, as such a move will contribute to a sense of belonging and enhance the safety and security of students when moving between campuses, accommodation and workplaces,” Dr Withers said.

Universities Australia calls on the Baird Review of the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act* and the Council of Australian Governments' *National International Student Strategy Taskforce* to examine the findings of the report closely.

“It is of paramount importance that the Senate Committee's report is given appropriate consideration by all levels of government,” Dr Withers said.

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