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Changes in International Student Visas Welcomed as a Good Start

Australian university business schools, who graduate just under half of the country's international university students, welcome the Federal Government's changes to international student visas.

The President of the Australian Business Deans Council, Professor David Grant, says the visa changes send an important signal to current international students.

'They demonstrate how much Australia values the personal, cultural, social and economic contributions made by our international students and our desire to support them in completing their studies with us,' Professor Grant says.

'The visa changes are also critical to maintaining our competitive positioning in the international market and putting us on a more stable footing for the future.'

'However, it is not clear if the post-study work rights will apply to international students who commence studies on-line while the current border restrictions are in place. Such a measure would be helpful, but the current announcement appears to apply only to existing student visa holders,' Professor Grant says.'

Federal Government Ministers Dan Tehan and Alan Tudge [announced these changes](#) yesterday:

- The Government will recommence granting student visas in all locations lodged outside Australia. This means when borders re-open, students will already have visas and be able to make arrangements to travel
- International students will be able to lodge a further student visa application free of charge, if they are unable to complete their studies within their original visa validity due to COVID-19
- Current student visa holders studying online outside Australia due to COVID-19 will be able to use that study to count towards the Australian study requirement for a post-study work visa
- Graduates who held a student visa will be eligible to apply for a post-study work visa outside Australia if they are unable to return due to COVID-19
- Additional time will be given for applicants to provide English language results where COVID-19 has disrupted access to these services.

Professor Grant says: 'The five changes to visas are one part of a wider more holistic response needed to stem the haemorrhaging of the 40 billion dollars that the sector contributed to higher education – especially universities – and our wider economy last year.'

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