

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery

Minister for Trade

Minister for Business Precincts

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Racing



Friday, 8 October 2021

VICTORIA SETS PLAN TO WELCOME BACK INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students will start returning to Victoria by the end of the year under the Victorian Government's Student Arrivals Plan, which has been submitted to the Commonwealth for approval.

The Plan provides a graduated, safe return to study in Victoria for international students, and a pipeline for continued arrivals through 2022.

Students arriving under the plan will be in addition to Victoria's existing international arrivals cap, which means they will not displace returning Australians.

Under the first stage of the plan, 120 places will be available each week for Victorian university students, prioritising those who need to undertake practical work to continue or complete their degrees, such as health and medical degree students, as well as postgraduate research students.

Universities will provide funding towards the extra quarantine places for student visa holders, with students required to cover the cost of their flight to Melbourne. Students will be quarantined in dedicated accommodation managed by COVID-19 Quarantine Victoria.

The second stage will enable more places with larger-scale international student arrivals from across the sector, including those enrolled in TAFEs, English-language courses, private education providers and secondary schools.

International students are a vital part of Victoria's academic and broader community. While over 75,000 international students from 100 countries are currently studying in Victoria, around 47,000 more are enrolled with Victorian education providers but remain offshore while Australia's international borders are closed.

International education is a critical services export and jobs provider for Victoria, contributing a peak of \$13.7 billion to the state's economy and supporting around 79,000 Victorian jobs prior to the pandemic.

More information is available at coronavirus.vic.gov.au/international-student-arrivals-plan.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Trade Martin Pakula

"This sensible plan will progressively get students who are enrolled at Victorian universities, TAFEs and colleges safely into Victoria so they can undertake their studies."

"A gradual return of international students means we can keep Victorians safe and not affect places for returning Australians."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney

"We are excited to welcome back international students from the end of this year – they are a valued part of our community and help make it vibrant and prosperous."

"We have made a record investment to help universities, TAFEs and training organisations through the pandemic – ensuring Victoria remains Australia's top education destination."

Quotes attributable to Vice-Chancellor of the University of Melbourne Professor Duncan Maskell

"Victorian universities have been working collaboratively with the Victorian Government on a plan to facilitate the return of international students to the state."

"We are pleased the plan has now been submitted to the Federal Government – we look forward to Minister Tudge reviewing and approving the plan as soon as possible."

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