

# Media Release

**The Hon Tim Pallas MP**

Treasurer

Minister for Industrial Relations

Minister for Trade and Investment



Monday, 20 March 2023

## RETURN OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BUOYS VICTORIA

International students are flocking to Victoria and Melbourne – Australia’s best student city – injecting energy, boosting the economy and providing a ready supply of workers for jobs.

Department of Home Affairs data shows since international borders reopened in December 2021, the number of student visa holders onshore in Victoria has doubled to more than 141,000.

China, India, Vietnam, Nepal and Colombia are the top five countries supplying students and contributing to the 107 per cent jump.

Minister for Trade and Investment Tim Pallas visited the Study Melbourne Hub in Hardware Lane, handing out welcome bags filled with Melbourne essentials including a myki card and Queen Victoria Market voucher.

For eight years Melbourne has been Australia’s top performer in the QS Best Student Cities index based on affordability, quality of life, standard of universities and diversity – and in 2023 the city has moved up a spot in the world rankings to fifth behind only London, Munich, Seoul and Zurich.

International education supports Victoria’s reputation for research excellence, helping make us a leader in a highly competitive global field and underpinning the state’s innovation drive.

Graduates bolster Victoria’s highly qualified and globally connected workforce, which makes the state a compelling proposition for businesses looking to invest in new ideas and enterprises.

Generating \$6.9 billion in export revenue in 2021, international education is Victoria’s third biggest export earner, behind food and fibre and manufacturing, and supports more than 40,000 jobs.

The Andrews Labor Government is backing international education to grow, with \$10 million invested from the Melbourne City Revitalisation Fund to upgrade the Study Melbourne Hub and support newly arrived students.

Study Melbourne provides free legal advice on employment and accommodation matters and confidential 24-hour, seven-day assistance to international students across Victoria.

Last year the Labor Government launched the International Education Recovery Plan 2025, backed by almost \$53 million in funding for initiatives including the expansion of Victoria’s Global Education Network to 19 locations, with extra resources in Colombia, Korea, Japan and Vietnam.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Trade and Investment Tim Pallas

*“We’re a welcoming state and it’s great to see large numbers of students from all around the world back in Melbourne and regional Victoria – they make us a more vibrant community.”*

*“International education supports tens of thousands of Victorian jobs and is a vital part of our economy – that’s why we are so serious about supporting the sector and its growth.”*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Higher Education Gayle Tierney

*“Students are attracted by our outstanding universities, TAFEs and colleges. We’ve backed our higher education institutions and it’s fantastic to see their excellence recognised by students from around the globe.”*

**Media contact:** Shaun Phillips 0407 553 763 | [shaun.phillips@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:shaun.phillips@minstaff.vic.gov.au)