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Department of Immigration and Citizenship
Student Visa Program

To whom this may concern,

This review is in regard to the Migration Legislation Amendment (Student Visas) Bill 2012, *to abolish automatic cancellation of student visas* and implement a system that enhances Australia's international competitiveness and while maintaining the integrity and quality of the Student Visa program.

As a migration agent, a member of the Education Committee, any changes that benefits DIAC and Education Providers are viewed a good move for the integrity and quality of student visa programs and economic growth. However any changes that benefits future student applicants is viewed as an outstanding move for Australia's international reputation as being the "land of opportunities."

Abolishing automatic cancellations of student visa are important to the longevity and experience of student visa holders in Australia. Student visa holders should have the same standards as Australian students. They will still need to complete assignments given to them, pass exams in order to complete the degree successfully and attend 75% of their classes. However notices should be sent out to students who are at risk of breaching conditions within a timeframe that will give the students enough time to bring themselves up to satisfactory standards according to the education provider. If the student cannot do so within the timeframe then assessments of why the breach is being committed and the circumstances which led to these breaches should be done with either or both the education provider and a DIAC officer.

Recommendations of The Knight Review are a great step into moving forward with Australia's time. All graduates of a bachelor and higher should be able to receive work rights according to their degree (Recommendation 4.1). It allows the student to stay and contribute to the Australian workforce, gain experience working in Australia, enhance their career opportunities when they return overseas and potentially enhance working relationships between Australia with other countries. Most student applicants are young adults, fresh out of high school. I have seen many circumstances where applicants have a change of mind to what degree they wanted to study. Reasons for this range from the degree was different from their expectations, they choose that degree to please their parents or lost of interest in the

area. However allowing them to work without tying them to any particular occupation allows flexibility for students to explore other industries and consider further study. On another note if our objective is to encourage student applicants to apply studying in Australia we should follow our major competitors in not setting an English Language competent level. Current situations are most applicants have the finance to study and live well in Australia however because of the IELTS requirement of score 5.5 they miss out on studying in Australia. Hence had applied to study with our competitors. However IELTS score are still needed to determine student competence of the English language. If they do not pass 5.5 score then students will be required to study English in Australia as a compulsory condition on their visa. They may be given a provisional student visa. The regulation of the condition is that they must study English and pass the course in order to continue their university degree. A timeframe of 50 weeks should be sufficient for any student visa holder to reach a satisfactory English level. Therefore continues to balance improved competitiveness and quality and integrity of the student program.

Lowering the financial requirements will be a great incentive for students to study in Australia. It will relieve a great burden on students who are genuine applicants especially for those who are in Assessment Level 4 category. Due to the GFC there has been a decline in student visa applications at my office. 98% of my clients are from Asia; 80% of them are from Cambodia, 10% Vietnam, 7% Thailand and 3% are from China. As you can see most of my clients fall into AL2-3 Before the GFC I had promoted Australian universities and private colleges though study tours (visiting high schools to encourage graduating students to consider studies overseas) however since the GFC, study tours have not been as active due to the financial requirement of studying in Australia. Current financial requirements are too high for the current global economy. Reducing the financial requirements will open up Australia to a greater, wider market.

In considering the proposals of Knight Recommendations I do agree with needing to create a more flexible Genuine Temporary Entrant criterion to meet today's market while still maintaining the quality, integrity and competitiveness of the International sector, as well as strengthening the integrity of the Student visa program. Abolishing immediate cancellations for non-compliance of study requirements is a start to looking into ways in enhancing student visa holder's experience. The inclusion of working options and lowering financial requirements will open Australia to a bigger market and make it an attractive destination to study. I also recommend to abolish the significance of entrants achieving a 5.5 IELTS score or higher but rather use it has a guideline to the students' English level. For those who are under the 5.5 score will have a condition to take English classes in Australia.

Yours truly,

Jenny TEW

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