



13 March 2013

Committee Secretary  
House of Representatives Standing Committee on  
Education and Employment  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
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Committee Secretary,

I write this submission on behalf of the **Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN)** in support of the Higher Education Support Amendment (Asian Century) Bill 2013 (hereafter the Bill).

The ATN universities have a commitment to growing mobility exchanges to Asia. Of the approximately 7000 Australian university students that participated in a student exchange to Asia in 2012, 16% of those (1142 undergraduate and non- HDR postgraduate students) were from an ATN University.

The ATN supports the Bill as a means of achieving the objectives of the Asian Century White Paper and providing greater opportunities for personal and professional development for Australian university students.

In particular, the ATN fully supports the extension of the OS-HELP loans to enable clinical placements and internships to be completed offshore and thus providing more opportunities for students to gain industry experience. This initiative should have flow on benefits for Australian employers who will be able to hire from a larger pool of graduates returning to Australia with international experiences and perspectives and a network of contacts in Asia with which to develop business linkages. However it should be noted that Australian universities are at different stages of development in being able to offer international internship opportunities to students.

The provision of a \$1000 loan for students to undertake an intensive, preparatory language course at a language provider is a considered addition to supporting students with their overseas exchange or internship. The provision of this loan should provide reassurances to students seeking an international experience of their ability to undertake the preparation necessary to effectively communicate and take full advantage of their overseas experience. However, in the interests of protecting students provisions should be made to ensure that language providers are accredited.

The ATN believe that opening up opportunities to postgraduate students is a positive step along with the reduction from 0.5 EFTSL to 0.125 EFTSL in load remaining upon return. This will be well received and result in an increase overall and especially for

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postgraduate students who have less time in their course plan for an overseas study experience.

The ATN brings together five of the most innovative and enterprising universities in Australia. We are committed to forging partnerships with industry and government to deliver practical results through focused research. ATN universities teach over 230,000 students, or almost 20% of Australia's student population. With 1 in 4 international students choosing to study at an ATN university, we are also the largest provider of international education, both with our onshore and offshore students. We enrol 19% of Australia's low SES students, 14% of disabled students and 17% of indigenous students.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss this submission further, please do not hesitate to me on (

Yours sincerely

Vicki Thomson  
Executive Director  
Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN)

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