

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2005-2006 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 3
Output Group: 3.3 – International Education Group

DEST Question No. E365_06

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

1. South Australia is defined as “regional” from the point of view of the new immigration category of Regional Skilled Migration Visas, isn't it?
2. Isn't the intention here in part to give the State a boost because its international education industry needed additional support?
3. How well are South Australian universities doing in this market, compared to those in Victoria, NSW and Queensland?
4. Won't a new private university aimed especially at the international market jeopardise their position?

Answer:

Regional Skilled Migration Visas

1. The state of South Australia is considered as a 'regional' area for the purposes of the Skilled Independent Regional (SIR) visa.

South Australia is also defined as regional for the purposes of the General Skilled Migration Points Test. General Skilled Migration applicants who have studied for at least two years in one or more areas in regional or low population growth metropolitan Australia are eligible for an additional 5 points under this test.

2. The purpose of the SIR visa and the additional five points under the General Skilled Migration Points Test is to assist regional areas to attract and retain skilled migrants to fill local skills shortages, boost regional development and counter population declines in regional areas.

The SIR visa was introduced on 1 July 2004. It enables states and territories to determine which skilled migrants they wish to sponsor, taking into account the particular skills shortages and needs of their state or territory. Applicants for an SIR visa must be sponsored by a state or territory government or their appointed regional certifying body and must agree to live and work or study in regional Australia for at least two years before they will become eligible for permanent residency.

3. South Australia's share of international student enrolments in Australian higher education institutions has remained steady at 5% between 2002 and 2004. The table below shows 2005 year to date enrolments in the higher sector for each state and territory compared to the same period last year. As can be seen from this table, South Australia has 6% of higher education enrolments in the year to date to April 2005 compared to 5% in the same period last year.

State/Territory	Year to date April 2004	% of total enrolments	Year to date April 2005	% of total enrolments
ACT	3347	3	3498	3
NSW	42669	34	48871	36
NT	132	0	111	0
QLD	18239	15	19512	14
SA	6564	5	7818	6
TAS	1405	1	1608	1
VIC	39991	32	43222	32
WA	11675	9	12264	9
TOTAL	124022	100	136904	100

4. This is a matter for the South Australian Government. While Carnegie Mellon would probably compete with other South Australian higher education institutions for international students, its establishment may serve to improve the attractiveness of the State as a study destination, enhancing South Australia's international education exports.