

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE12/0187) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration

Senator Cash asked:

The DIAC website states that the majority of the stage two Knight Review changes are proposed to be implemented by mid 2012 with some other changes proposed to commence in early 2013.

- a. What are the stage two Knight Review changes?
- b. How many have been implemented to date?
- c. Are all stage two Knight Review changes on track to be implemented by mid 2012?
- d. In relation to the “other changes proposed to commence in early 2012”. What changes are these?

Answer:

An implementation timeline is available on the DIAC website at <http://www.immi.gov.au/students/knight/table-of-recommendations.htm>

- a. Stage two Knight Review changes include recommendations: 3 to 8; 11 – 13; 15 – 22; 24 – 36; and 39 – 41.
- b. A number of the stage two recommendations have been implemented to date.
- c. Some of the stage two recommendations are to be implemented by the end of March 2012, including streamlined visa processing, one of the key Knight Review recommendations. The recommendations are progressively being implemented as announced.
- d. Other changes proposed to be implemented by late March include:
 - unlimited work rights for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students (recommendation 7);
 - removal of the requirement for Assessment Level 4 Schools Sector (subclass 571) visa applicants to provide evidence of an English language proficiency test to support their claims for the grant of a student visa (recommendation 11);
 - making the maximum period of time new Schools Sector (subclass 571) visa holders can study English 50 weeks across all assessment levels. This compares to the current arrangements where Assessment Level 3 students are restricted to 40 weeks and Assessment Level 4 students to 30 weeks (recommendation 12);

- allowing Student Guardian visa holders unlimited part-time study rights for English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS) (recommendation 13);
- measuring student visa holder work conditions as 40 hours/fortnight instead of 20 hours/week (recommendation 28); and
- the ability to grant student visas in advance of 4 months before the start of the course (recommendation 39).

The remainder of the stage two recommendations are on track and will be implemented later in 2012 and in 2013.