

## **QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

### **ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING: 13 FEBRUARY 2012**

#### **IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO**

#### **(AE12/0191) Program 1.1: Visa and Migration**

Senator Cash asked:

Please detail the differences between the current student visa processing and the new visa access for prospective students anticipated to be in place later this year?

*Answer:*

Streamlined visa processing is proposed to be implemented in late March 2012. Under the proposed streamlined visa processing arrangements, the government has indicated it will treat student visa applicants with a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) from a participating university in Australia at Bachelor, Masters or Doctoral degree as though they were a lower migration risk (similar to the current Assessment Level 1), regardless of their country of origin.

The current assessment levels serve to align student visa requirements to the immigration risk posed by applicants from a particular country studying in a particular education sector. Assessment Level 1 represents the lowest immigration risk and Assessment Level 5 the highest. The higher the assessment level, the greater the evidence an applicant is required to demonstrate to support their claims for the grant of a student visa.

Applicants who are eligible for streamlined visa processing would generally have reduced evidentiary requirements when applying for a student visa, regardless of their nationality. All student visa applicants will still have to satisfy the new genuine temporary entrant requirement.

In addition, all applicants would still be subject to usual requirements such as having health insurance and not being a security or health risk. The department would also reserve the right to look more closely at applications from any group that pose a particular concern.