

Media release

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IRU welcomes Commonwealth approval of international student return plans

The Federal Government's approval of international student return plans in South Australia is welcomed by the Innovative Research Universities (IRU) as an important step in Australia's COVID-19 recovery.

The IRU looks forward to an announcement from the Commonwealth Government regarding New South Wales' international student return proposal. We see these are the first of several safe arrangements for students to return to Australia.

Last week the Federal Government announced its approval of a proposal by South Australia for international students to return to Australia via a specific quarantine hub that will ensure maximum safety for the Australian community and the students.

The plans aim for the return of 160 students per fortnight, with the costs covered by the universities and the students. It will not affect the number of returning Australians.

These are small numbers to renew an important element of Australia's universities' provision of excellent education to students, whether Australian or from most countries of the world.

IRU member Flinders University, its students and its local community, are set to benefit from this announcement.

IRU Executive Director Conor King said:

"The approval of the SA plan is a step in the right direction to help international students return to the country and to ensure Australia remains competitive as an international student destination.

"I hope that approved plans for other States and the Northern Territory will soon follow, supporting students from around the world to complete their education safely.

"International students choose Australian universities for the excellent education they will receive.

"International students contribute to the success of Australian universities, including for research outcomes and educational experience.

"This announcement from the Federal Government shows it recognises the importance of international students to Australia's COVID-19 recovery."

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About the IRU

The IRU is a network of seven comprehensive universities committed to inclusive excellence in teaching and research in Australia. Its members are Charles Darwin University, Flinders University, Griffith University, James Cook University, La Trobe University, Murdoch University and Western Sydney University.