

## Media statement

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# IRU statement on changes to international education

The Innovative Research Universities (IRU) will work constructively with government on the new measures announced today for international education.

The changes to international student visa processing implemented by the Australian Government since the end of 2023 have disproportionately and unfairly impacted our universities and students. Further changes to the processing of student visas and the allocation of places must deliver greater equity and clarity for students and universities.

International education delivers significant social, economic and cultural benefits to communities right across the country. Australia's success in international education over decades is a key part of our soft power and confident engagement with our region and the world. International students are valued members of our communities and bring their skills to the workforce in critical sectors, including in regional Australia.

The Innovative Research Universities have a strong track record in international education, as high-quality, low-risk providers, with diverse student cohorts and valuable experience in the successful delivery of Australian education offshore. IRU members also work together internationally to engage at scale with key partner countries, with a focus on the Indo-Pacific region.

We support the government's ongoing focus on the integrity of the international education system, to maintain Australia's reputation for quality and the protection of students. And we welcome the government's commitment today to consult with international education providers on the new draft International Education and Skills Strategic Framework – these are significant changes that must be implemented carefully.

Any limits on places should leave room for equitable and sustainable growth and for further adjustments in the coming years as global conditions, and the needs of the Australian economy and communities, change.

A new strategic approach to international education should also include partnership between the Australian Government and universities on the ways in which education and research cooperation can build deep and enduring links in support of Australia's diplomatic and foreign policy goals.

In our submission to the Universities Accord, the IRU called for a positive and proactive strategy for international education and research, prioritising engagement with the Indo-Pacific. In the current focus on the number of international students coming to study in Australia, we must not lose sight of the broader benefits that come from universities confidently engaging with the world.

[iru.edu.au](http://iru.edu.au)

## About the IRU

The IRU is a network of seven comprehensive universities across Australia committed to inclusive education and research with impact. Its members are Flinders University, Griffith University, James Cook University, La Trobe University, Murdoch University, University of Canberra, and Western Sydney University.

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