

19 February 2024

**ATTN:**

**The Hon. Clare O'Neil MP**  
Minister for Home Affairs,  
Minister for Cyber Security

**The Hon. Andrew Giles MP**  
Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and  
Multicultural Affairs

## JOINT OPEN LETTER

### Student Representative Bodies from the Group of Eight (Go8) Universities Call for the Reconsideration of Changes to the Temporary Graduate Visa Policy

Dear Ministers,

The undersigned student representative bodies from the Go8 universities of Australia, call for urgent reconsideration of proposed reforms to the Temporary Graduate Visa (TGV) or 485 visa, announced by the Federal Government.

Whilst welcoming many of the reforms which are part of the government's new Migration Strategy, we oppose the reduction of the age limit for the TGV from 50 to 35, and we advocate for the grandfathering of these changes to ensure the fair and respectful consideration of current international students.

This cap will disproportionately affect Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students, who tend to begin their HDR candidatures at a later age. HDR students contribute substantially to Australia's research output and this proposed cap risks a substantial loss of current and future research talent, skills and output. This is a direct blow to the vibrancy and diversity of Australia's research community.

Some preliminary research also indicates that these changes will negatively and disproportionately affect HDRs studying in fields of critical shortage, as well as women, who tend to undertake HDR candidatures later in life.

We also call on the government to adopt a grandfathering approach to the implementation of these changes. Any reforms to the TGV should be applied prospectively, and should not retrospectively impact current student visa holders. Students who commenced their studies under the current policy should not be subjected to these sudden and drastic changes.

We strongly urge the authorities to reconsider these changes, recognising the detrimental impact they will have on the international student community and Australia's standing as a leading destination for higher education and research.



Yours faithfully,



**Weihong Liang**  
*President*  
Sydney University Postgraduate  
Representative Association



**Richard Lee**  
*President (Higher Degree by Research)*  
Association of Postgraduate Students, The  
University of Queensland



**Yash Koppula**  
*President (Coursework)*  
Association of Postgraduate Students, The  
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**Tony Le**  
*President*  
The University of New South Wales  
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**Sahampath Hettiarachchi**  
*President*  
Monash Graduate Association



**Jesse Gardner Russell**  
*President*  
The University of Melbourne Graduate  
Student Association



**Merlin Wang**  
*President*  
Adelaide University Union (YouX)



**Lashhanth Dhevaraju**  
*Postgraduate Member*  
University of Adelaide Council



**Christopher-John Daudu**  
*President*  
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