



For immediate release

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One Step Forward in Supporting International Students

The NUS welcomes the Federal Government's announcement earlier today regarding the lifting of the working hour limit. Under the new proposal, student visa holders employed in hospitality and tourism will be able to work more than their allotted 40 hours per fortnight. This change is to be announced at the Federal budget on the 11th of May.

This package is a step in the right direction – but more is needed to assure the wellbeing of International Students in the post-pandemic recovery.

International Students need to be viewed by this government as more than just an economic recovery mechanism worth over 1% of our GDP.

They should be wholly appreciated for the wealth of cultural and economic value they bring to this country, and not used as a scapegoat for a shortage of secure jobs.

This announcement ahead of the Federal budget on Tuesday alludes to a more promising future for the 450,000 International students in Australia, 1/3 of which regularly skip meals due to lost income during the pandemic.

The NUS calls on the Federal Government to make this change a permanent scheme, to assure the 50% of International students who are worried about rent that they are as deserving of an equitable standard of living as any other student.

For this budget to prove that it cares about students and not just their dollar value, this scheme needs to be coupled with a crackdown on wage theft against International students in the retail and hospitality sector. We know that more than a quarter of International students face stolen wages and abuse at work. Simply put – this scheme *will not work* if they don't have enough disposable income to inject into the economy.

International students deserve a Federal Government that cares about their welfare, not just their dollar value.

More to follow in the NUS budgetary package over the coming week.

For further comment:

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