



For immediate release

04/06/2021

## **One Off COVID Payment a Good Start, 485 Visa Extensions Next**

The Prime Minister had three main jobs for 2021.

Firstly, vaccination rollout. Secondly, hotel quarantine. The third, often forgotten task is saving our exports sector, and specifically, international students.

International students have been forgotten over Christmas, forgotten over the budget, and now left behind again in time for a return to campus in time for Semester 2.

The NUS welcomes the government's announcement to extend the new COVID-support payment to those on all classes of visas, including international students. However, a cash handout for a couple of weeks is not enough to save our sector and the students that pay thousands to keep it running.

"Now is the time to cement financial support with an extension of 485 visas," says NUS President, Zoe Ranganathan. "How can we expect recently graduated international students to secure permanent residency and find postgraduate employment in the middle of the biggest health crisis in recent history?", she says.

The NUS calls for the automatic extension of the visas of all affected international students at no cost, as well as an amnesty period for 2021 from visa requirements that cannot be met due to the crisis as a result of changes to travel and study.

"We need to take a holistic approach to supporting students through this crisis," says International Students Officer Varun Kale.

The NUS keenly awaits the next move from the Federal Government.

We stand in solidarity with all international students affected by this pandemic, onshore and offshore.

### **For further comment:**

#### **NUS National President**

**Zoe Ranganathan**

E: [president@nus.asn.au](mailto:president@nus.asn.au)

P: 0411 606 808

#### **International Students Officer**

**Varun Kale**

E: [international@nus.asn.au](mailto:international@nus.asn.au)