

# English Australia

## MEDIA RELEASE



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### **SIMPLIFIED STUDENT VISA FRAMEWORK TO BENEFIT STUDENTS AND PROVIDERS**

English Australia welcomed the announcement yesterday of a new simplified student visa framework (SSVF) that will make applying to study in Australia less complicated for students and will provide a level playing field for low risk education providers across all sectors.

The new framework was announced yesterday by Minister for Education and Training, the Hon Christopher Pyne MP, and Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash.

English Australia's Executive Director, Sue Blundell, said the joint announcement was just one example of the new focus on a coordinated, cross-portfolio approach to ensuring the competitiveness of Australia's international education industry, underpinned by the creation of a new Coordinating Council for International Education of which Ms Blundell is a member.

"Since the introduction of streamlined visa processing (SVP) in 2012, English Australia has continued to communicate our concerns regarding the negative impact on the English language sector and the fact that the SVP model was just not sustainable in the long term," said Ms Blundell. "We are delighted that the Department has listened to our concerns and that the government has accepted the recommendations to establish a new framework which will make it easier for genuine students to apply for a visa to study with high quality, low risk education providers."

The changes introduced by government will reduce the number of student visa subclasses from eight to two and introduce a simplified single immigration risk framework for all international students.

"Whilst the broad outline of the framework is agreed, there is still work to be done on working out some of the detail," said Ms Blundell, "I am delighted to be invited to be a member of the working group that will guide the implementation of the new framework."

For further information:

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## **English Australia**

*English Australia is the national peak body for the English language sector of international education, and represents over 120 member colleges throughout Australia that provide quality English language programs to students and professionals from around the world. 88% of the more than 163,000 international students learning English in Australia in 2014 chose to study with an English Australia member college.*

*As an association, English Australia has a focus on:*

- *representing member colleges whose core business is English language teaching;*
- *delivering best practice support and expertise to member colleges; and*
- *providing the English language sector with global visionary leadership.*

## **Learning English in Australia**

*There are several reasons why students travel to English speaking countries to learn English. For those students who have an 'end goal' such as to undertake formal study, improving their English may be an important factor in getting them into their chosen course at a school, training provider or university. An increasing number of students also see learning English as key to a successful career, for example in international business; others come to prepare for travel or just to gain the experience of living in a foreign country.*

*A strong regulatory framework, attractive lifestyle, quality schools and the ability to flexibly combine study, travel and work on the various visa options available to them (tourist, working holiday, student) are primary reasons for Australia's appeal to people overseas considering learning English. Australia is the only country delivering English language training that has national standards specific to English language training that are required for all providers. The sector's quality assurance framework operates within the national Education Services for Overseas Students legislative framework that is the responsibility of the Department of Education and Training. This protects Australia's reputation for delivering quality education services and the interests of overseas students, by setting minimum standards and providing tuition and financial assurance.*

## **The English language sector – the global context**

*Over 1,557,000 people travelled to an English speaking country to learn English in 2013 – globally the industry is worth over US\$11.7 billion. The top two destinations for international students wishing to learn English are the UK and the USA, followed by Canada and Australia. These top four destinations attract 85% of English language students and deliver 89% of student weeks.*