

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017**

Outcome: Higher Education Research and International

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ16-000918

Senator Collins, Jacinta provided in writing.

International student visa issues - visa streamlining system

Question

What measures are being taken to ensure the visa streamlining system continues to be effective and does not do reputational risk to Australia's international education sector?

Answer

- Australia's reputation as a destination of choice for international students is supported by strong quality assurance systems and effective student protection mechanisms. Australia has independent national regulators, comprehensive legislation and strong partnerships between government agencies, industry and education providers.
- The Department of Education and Training communicates regularly with the sector through formal and informal channels and is able to monitor and respond rapidly to the effect of initiatives such as the streamlining of the student visa system.
- The department works closely with the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP), including through participation on bodies such as the Education Visa Consultative Committee, to identify and resolve issues as they arise.
- The growth in international student numbers over the last year reflects the effectiveness of recent Government policy reforms in international education and student visa settings. In August 2016 there were 12 per cent more international students in Australia than at the same time last year.
- Since the introduction of the Simplified Student Visa Framework (SSVF) on 1 July 2016 there was around a 10 per cent increase in student visa grants (to 30 September 2016) compared to the same period in 2015.