



**ASSOCIATION OF
AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION
REPRESENTATIVES IN INDIA**

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Australia has long been known as a welcoming destination for international students, offering world-class education and a high standard of living. For many years, universities and their education agents have invested significant effort in attracting students from overseas, but these efforts now risk being undone.

The policy announcements related to international students have raised concerns, triggering what seems to be a *butterfly effect*. Firstly, the 125% increase in the student visa application fee, from \$710 to \$1,600, and the rushed implementation of **caps** seem to lack clear logic. The government needs to reassess the broader economic contributions of international students and the connections between international education and the economy.

In an attempt to reduce numbers, many genuine students have had their visa applications declined in the past few months for no reason. The SSVF system did not work and classification of public / private universities was confusing and unfair because every student chooses a university according to their own needs and circumstances. Students were forced to make contrary choices due to these levels. However there is no clarity on removal or replacing classifications (risk ratings).

Ministerial Direction 107 being scrapped is good as it did hurt all stakeholders

Capping the Group of Eight (Go8) universities will definitely result in high-quality students choosing to study in other countries. While there are incentives to study at regional universities, they may not be sufficient and can be more.

Students who prefer to study in vibrant, populous Australian cities may instead opt to go to another country if limited to regional options. Additionally, institutes might be forced to raise tuition fees, which would affect profile yield and completion rates, ultimately working against diversity.

Although some universities are facing reduced caps, it is essential that they do not lose sight of the importance of diversity. India remains a key partner for Australia, and Indian students should continue to be welcomed. To attract the best Indian students, Australian universities must develop strong strategies and offer more scholarships, ensuring that the relationship between the two countries remains strong and mutually beneficial.

The entire sector is worried and in jeopardy. A more reasonable approach could have been adopted. Linking student visas to institutes would have been much better

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