

Question on notice no. 298

Portfolio question number: SQ26-000655

Budget estimates

Education and Employment Committee, Education Portfolio

Senator Mehreen Faruqi: asked the Department of Education on 15 June 2026—

In relation to the Migration Amendment (Temporary Graduate Visa Application Charge) Regulations 2026 (F2026L00163) , registered on 28 February 2026 and commencing 1 March 2026:

1. Did the Department of Education provide advice to the government on the impact of this fee increase on Australia's international education competitiveness prior to the registration of the legislative instrument?
 - a. If such advice was provided, please provide it.
 - b. If no such advice was provided, can the Department explain why the impact on Australia's fourth largest service export - which contributed \$52 billion to the economy in 2025 and supports more than 250,000 jobs² - was not assessed prior to the registration of the legislative instrument?
2. What engagement has the Department of Education had with the university sector regarding this fee increase since 1 March 2026?
3. Has any feedback or advice been received from the sector - including from Universities Australia, individual universities, or student representative bodies? - and if so, please provide it.
 - a. If no engagement has occurred, can the Department explain why consultation with the university sector has not been initiated given the potential impact of this decision on international student enrolments and therefore university funding?
4. Has the Department of Education assessed the potential impact of this fee increase on international student enrolments in health and education courses - fields in which Jobs and Skills Australia identifies persistent national workforce shortages - at Australian universities?
 - a. If such an assessment has been conducted, please provide it.
 - b. If no assessment has been conducted, given that a reduction in enrolments in these fields could directly affect the supply of graduates into Australia's most critically understaffed occupations, can the Department explain why this was not considered within its advice to government?
5. Did the Department of Education provide advice to the government regarding the introduction of a transitional or grandfathering provision for international graduates already onshore at the time of the announcement, many of whom had already signed leases, accepted job offers, and made financial plans based on the existing fee structure?

- a. If the Department did advocate for a transitional provision and that advice was not accepted, can the Department confirm this?
- b. If the Department did not advocate for a transitional provision, can the Department explain why the interests of international students and graduates already onshore at the time of the announcement were not raised as part of its advice to government?

Answer —

Please see the attached PDF.

Standing Committees on Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2026-2027

Outcome: Higher Education Research and International

Department of Education Question No. SQ26-000655

Senator Mehreen Faruqi provided in writing.

Migration Amendment (Temporary Graduate Visa Application Charge) Regulations 2026 (F2026L00163)

Question

In relation to the Migration Amendment (Temporary Graduate Visa Application Charge) Regulations 2026 (F2026L00163), registered on 28 February 2026 and commencing 1 March 2026:

1. Did the Department of Education provide advice to the government on the impact of this fee increase on Australia's international education competitiveness prior to the registration of the legislative instrument?
 - a. If such advice was provided, please provide it.
 - b. If no such advice was provided, can the Department explain why the impact on Australia's fourth largest service export — which contributed \$52 billion to the economy in 2025 and supports more than 250,000 jobs² — was not assessed prior to the registration of the legislative instrument?
2. What engagement has the Department of Education had with the university sector regarding this fee increase since 1 March 2026?
3. Has any feedback or advice been received from the sector — including from Universities Australia, individual universities, or student representative bodies? — if so, please provide it.
 - a. If no engagement has occurred, can the Department explain why consultation with the university sector has not been initiated given the potential impact of this decision on international student enrolments and therefore university funding?
4. Has the Department of Education assessed the potential impact of this fee increase on international student enrolments in health and education courses — fields in which Jobs and Skills Australia identifies persistent national workforce shortages — at Australian universities?
 - a. If such an assessment has been conducted, please provide it.
 - b. If no assessment has been conducted, given that a reduction in enrolments in these fields could directly affect the supply of graduates into Australia's most critically understaffed occupations, can the Department explain why this was not considered within its advice to government?
5. Did the Department of Education provide advice to the government regarding the introduction of a transitional or grandfathering provision for international graduates already onshore at the time of the announcement, many of whom had already signed leases, accepted job offers, and made financial plans based on the existing fee structure?
 - a. If the Department did advocate for a transitional provision and that advice was not accepted, can the Department confirm this?
 - b. If the Department did not advocate for a transitional provision, can the Department explain why the interests of international students and graduates already onshore at the time of the announcement were not raised as part of its advice to government?

Answer

The increase in the visa application charge for the Temporary Graduate visa (TGV) was introduced as part of the Government's Mid-year Economic and Fiscal Outlook for 2025-26.

The Migration Amendment (Temporary Graduate Visa Application Charge) Regulations 2026 and associated stakeholder engagement are a matter for the Department of Home Affairs.

Correspondence received by the Department of Education regarding the visa application charge for Temporary Graduate visas was referred to the Department of Home Affairs for response as the relevant agency.