



McGowan Government completely miss the target

What a mess the WA government have made of the International student market in Western Australia.

Since taking government in March 2017 they have consistently made public remarks and policy decisions that have devastated an industry worth \$2 billion a year and 2000 jobs to Western Australia annually.

They initially abolished Perth as a region for the RSMs permanent visa scheme making it harder for employees to seek skilled labour when they had proven to the WA state government that they were unable to find such skills in WA.

They followed this up by virtually closing the State Migration program through slashing the occupations available for State Sponsorship. To the point where in 2017/2018 WA did not sponsor even one skilled migrant.

Now they have introduced a graduate migration program in a desperate attempt to claw back the losses we have suffered through International students choosing to study in the Eastern States rather than in WA.

Let's be clear , the international student market is massively beneficial to WA. Every skilled migrant moving to WA on average creates 1.6 jobs for our economy. And as mentioned it is a multi billion dollar industry. The major factor in deciding where a student studies in Australia is what improves their chances of attaining a permanent visa after graduation. So WA closing the door on state sponsored migration had a devastating effect on our enrolment numbers.

As the national student applications grew by over 60,000 since March 2017, Western Australia's share of this increase was a miserly 1,096 students. Or to put it another way if WA had grown by the same rate as the other states it would have been worth an additional

\$342 million to our economy in course fees and living costs. We lost this through our state government policies being interpreted by international students that they were simply not welcome here.

Finally the WA government in October 2018 opened up a graduate list of occupations to sponsor international students but they have totally messed this up as well.

Firstly they have prioritised PHD and Masters graduates to the point where there are the only students under current policies who will have a chance of being sponsored by the WA state government for permanent residence. The problem with this is that the rest (degree, diploma and trade certificate students) are actually 70% of international students. So for the vast majority there is NO incentive to choose WA as their state to study in.

The second mistake and this maybe even more serious as the student community slowly realise, is that they are only offering 800 sponsorships for the whole of 2018/19. This compares to South Australia, NSW and Victoria who will each likely offer over 3000 places this program year again. And even the small ACT who have recently had their number of places increased to 1400 for the year.

The comments below from International students who have heard of this pitiful low figure of 800 places is telling ..

This trick of WA will scar the international students off from coming to the state.

The number of students in West Australia will decline accordingly

Not good news for the WA economy, I definitely recommend other states as all are doing at least fair for the international students because they know it is wise to provide the pathway for permanent residency as they already integrated into the economy.

If thats the WA immigration decisions, there is no reason for international students to consider coming to WA anymore. They will rather go to other states that have better opportunities for permanent visa

WA government never had balls to ask for a fair share of it's GST nor the royalties from the mining boom... now they are destroying its higher education export industry! Truly a great empty state in the making

To be honest, this is just sad and disappointing....it doesnt give future and existing international students any motivation to even consider studying in WA...whilst other states in Australia continue to back their international graduates by offering them state sponsorship, WA will lose big tym in the higher education sector.....

Study in WA is just wastage of money and time. WA govt strategy is only earning \$\$\$\$\$....from international students.

That's the reason WA economy is going worst. The state need more people to generate more revenue and sustain businesses. Economy can be only strengthen by inviting more immigrants. God bless WA government

*Government doesn't know what they want to do...they change rules every now and then...if you want people in WA then fix rules for few years otherwise don't implement new rules such as new migrants have to spend 5yrs in regional area when you can't provide them with permanent residency. That's a sh** and students should not come to WA for studies anymore.*

It is hard to imagine how the WA government could have made a bigger mess of this massive export earning industry in their first 18 months. And the rescue package has been exposed as a complete dud.

Unless they increase the sponsorship numbers in line with the 3000 plus places being offered by other states, and give some realistic opportunities to diploma, trade and degree students (which is 70% of the student market) then the disaster for the WA international education industry will continue.

Steven O'Neil
Managing Director
Iscah Migration , WA
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