

# Visa changes hit current students

*"They are already here and have already paid their fees"*

The head of a new international student body says the government's immigration changes hit student residency hopes.

The new Council of International Students Australia is also calling for the reform of work restrictions on students and increased student accommodation. It also wants NSW and Victoria to finally extend travel concessions to international students.

CISA president Robert Atcheson, a 32-year-old Texan studying law at the Australian National University, said that in cracking down on dodgy colleges exploiting the system, the government was also targeting students.

"They have come here under a legislative expectation that if they complete their studies they would be eligible to apply for permanent residency, and they are already here and have already paid their fees," Atcheson told *The Australian*.

The government has narrowed the number of occupations eligible for permanent residency, putting more emphasis on employer sponsorship. The changes are partly aimed at stamping out the practice, facilitated by unscrupulous colleges, of students studying vocational courses like hairdressing and cookery simply to secure residency with no intention of working in the course area.

The government is offering graduates hit by the changes an 18-month visa in which to try to secure work experience and sponsorship.

But the international education sector fears that a backlash from frustrated students caught out by the changes could damage Australia's reputation overseas.

In other developments, the international education sector fears government plans to boost the welfare of international students will be flawed by insufficient funding.

There are also growing fears that tighter regulations and immigration restrictions are driving students away from Australia.

The industry is frustrated that international students remain excluded from travel concessions in NSW and Victoria.

There is also concern that federal and state governments will make little new money available to boost accommodation and community engagement.

The Australia Council for Private Education and Training is the latest body to claim that the industry faced a severe downturn given falling visa applications. It says as many as 32,000 jobs could be shed by March 2012, cutting export revenue by \$3.6 million.

The government has introduced tighter restrictions on student visas and a mandated increase in the funds students must prove they have to support themselves. The government has also narrowed the list of skills for immigration priority. There are also tighter regulations on education agents.


These changes are aimed at weeding out dodgy colleges which provide courses in areas such as hairdressing and community welfare that were designed solely to give students residency and which have driven much of the sector's recent growth. But while the sector has backed the intention of the changes, it is worried they are being introduced too quickly.



## Containers find new design

University of Melbourne students have helped build Indigenous community centres out of old shipping containers.

The group of 15 Master of Architecture students worked in two groups during June to help install 'media boxes', multi-purpose community centres providing a focal point for skills training in the Gudorrka Community and Knuckey's Lagoon Community in the Northern Territory.

The shipping containers have been outfitted by locals working through the Ironbark Employment agency, while the students helped with the final landscape design and construction of the carport-style roof. 

*Pictured is Connie, Lexy, Silas, Cyrus, Leroy and Wayne.*

## MBA & POSTGRAD EXPO

### POSTGRAD COURSES ON SHOW

- Compare postgrad study options in one day
- Meet with local and interstate institutions
- Investigate graduate diplomas, masters and doctorates in diverse disciplines.

**Tuesday 14 September**

Melbourne Town Hall, 12pm – 7pm

**FREE ENTRY**  
Register Online or at the Expo

[www.postgradexpo.com.au](http://www.postgradexpo.com.au)



• Adelaide • Brisbane • Canberra • Melbourne • Perth • Sydney



## WE ARE SEEKING LEAD TENANT'S

**Would you like to live rent-free and make a real difference in the lives of young people at risk of homelessness?**

**Free Rent & Utilities** close to shopping centres and Public transport, Houses in the Altona Meadows area.

• Great opportunity for life experience while making a real what difference

• Available to move in July / August 2010

Lead Tenants are mentors who guide young people in a share-house environment. You will continue with your everyday life, whilst modelling mature living skills through activities such as cooking, grocery shopping and social activities. Two Lead Tenants will support up to two young people and both will guide them around share-house responsibilities by overseeing the day-to-day running of the house. All young people living in the house are supported by caseworkers and 24hr support is available.

#### Selection Criteria

- Enjoyment of the company of young people. Ability to have a positive impact on young people
- Demonstrates mature and independent living skills including being involved in studies or employment,
- Good communication skills and ability to act as positive role model,
- Flexible, resourceful, sociable, responsible,
- Will actively participate in the household,
- 12 months minimum commitment.

#### An Information Pack can sent to interested applicants by contacting:

Karryn Laurie, Lead Tenant Program. Salvation Army Westcare.

Phone: 9312 3544, Mob: 0457 825 694 Fax: 9312 1131

Email: [karryn.laurie@aus.salvationarmy.org](mailto:karryn.laurie@aus.salvationarmy.org)

**Not available right now? Contact us & be added to our e-mail list & be notified of future vacancies**