

Commissioner
Australian Services Exports
Productivity Commission
Locked Bag 2, Collins Street
Melbourne, VIC, 8003

By Email: services.exports@pc.gov.au

Dear Commissioner,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written submission to the Australian Government's Barriers to Services Exports: Productivity Commission Issues Paper.

The University of Tasmania is deeply committed to its social mission, as well as being a partner, innovator and change catalyst within the Tasmanian economy. The University is working to ensure that the higher education system is a contributor to the best possible future for Tasmania, for the community who live and work here and the individuals who visit our shores.

The value of the University's contribution to the State has been calculated as \$1.7 billion. However, the social, intellectual and cultural impact of the University of Tasmania is much broader than monetary. The University provides education exports to international students in Australia, to students in other countries via international partner campuses and online courses. Total enrolments for 2014 (which reflects that some students have multiple enrolments) was 33,879. The strong trend year to date indicates 2015 will better that figure.

The University is pursuing ambitious targets in the international arena, resulting in more than 1100 new international students starting this year, a 48 per cent growth in commencements. Strong demand is expected to year's end, with a new cohort of international students arriving in July 2015. These new students will join an existing group of around 2500 international students, who together add more than \$160 million to the Tasmanian economy in fees, accommodation and living expenses.

The University's feedback on domestic barriers to Australian higher education services exports is in Attachment 1. Specifically, we comment on the impact of the minor amendments to the Masters Degree Specifications, approved by the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Council, on the ability to compete globally against one year MBAs offered by international business schools. We provide feedback on possible two year Post-Study Work Visa arrangements for international students noting that some dual Masters programs will have difficulty attracting international students under the new AQF cognate degree requirements, particularly those that require work experience.

Additionally, the issue is raised regarding visa arrangements as domestic barriers to senior academic recruitment, fixed-term positions and research collaboration.

It is noted that the Commission released, on 30 April 2015, the International Education Services Research Paper which focuses on the visa system and regulation aimed at providing quality assurance in the delivery of education to international students.

Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute to the national understanding of this important matter.

Yours sincerely

Professor Peter Rathjen
Vice-Chancellor

15 May 2015