



# Supporting Australia's International Education Sector

## Cutting red tape for private education providers

On 30 April 2021 the Australian Government announced a package of measures to support the Australian international education and training providers most affected by COVID-19 and border closures. The Australian Government also has a deregulation measure which will reduce the administrative burden on private education providers that deliver education services to international students by removing a requirement under the *Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019* (ESOS Regulations) to report the receipt of fees on a monthly basis.

Once implemented, private providers will no longer have to report receipt of fees each month, representing a \$7.1 million administrative saving for the sector, across 1,185 private education providers.

It follows on from previous deregulatory savings under the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (ESOS Act) in 2018 and 2020, to bring total annual deregulation savings for the international education sector to \$60 million.

Removing this requirement reduces administrative costs on private providers and aligns private providers' responsibilities with the reporting requirements on public providers. The regulators will no longer have to monitor compliance with this requirement and will be able to redirect efforts elsewhere.

### How will this effect providers?

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment does not collect this information from public providers. Removing the reporting requirement for private providers will standardise reporting requirements for public and private education providers and increase consistency with the international education sector's risk-based approach to compliance monitoring.

Student tuition fees will remain protected under the Tuition Protection Service (TPS). The requirement for providers to record post-commencement fee payments in PRISMS was established to inform the TPS Director when calculating refund amounts. However, TPS processes instead use information provided direct by students, as well as information that providers are required to retain such as written agreements with pay schedules, payment receipts and bank statements.

Regulators and students can continue to request fee payment records from providers on a case by case basis where required.

Providers will continue to be required to report any pre-paid tuition fee amounts and non-tuition fee amounts at the time of enrolment.

## **Start date**

Removal of this requirement requires amendments to the ESOS Regulations, which will occur in the second half of 2021. The reporting function in PRISMS will be removed concurrently with the legislative change and providers will be informed when this change takes effect.