



Open Letter on International Student Levy Proposed in the Australian Universities Accord Interim Report

Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) is the voice for around 30,000 postgraduate students at the University of Sydney and is opposed to the international student levy proposed in the recent Australian Universities Accord Interim Report.

SUPRA asserts that any additional financial burden on international students will erode their well-being and jeopardizes Australia's reputation as a fair global hub for international education.

International students enrich our academic communities with diverse perspectives, cultures, and talents. They are integral to the vibrant tapestry of our universities and communities. It is our responsibility to ensure that their experiences are marked by inclusivity, support, and fairness.

The proposed levy, irrespective of its form or mechanism, places an additional financial strain on international students who are already facing substantial financial pressures. Research has shown that many international students grapple with the huge costs of living and housing in Australia, with many experiencing housing precarity and vulnerability to homelessness. Imposing an extra financial burden, directly or indirectly, through this levy will deter talented and ambitious students from choosing Australia as their educational destination.

At SUPRA, we firmly believe in fostering a sense of belonging for all students, including international students. If a levy is implemented, and we expect this to be imposed on students, the unfortunate perception of international students as mere "cash cows" will prevail, making them feel undervalued and disregarded as individuals with lives and dreams for their futures.

Moreover, such a levy would have far-reaching consequences beyond Australia. It will certainly negatively impact Australia's reputation among international students, their families, and communities. As countries such as the UK, Canada, and the USA enhance their international education offerings and become more competitive, now is not the time to add anxiety or burden on international students; instead, it is the time to support and embrace those who choose to study here and may want to call Australia home.

SUPRA urges all stakeholders to reject the proposed international student levy. It is imperative that we prioritize the well-being and experiences of international students, and foster an environment where all students feel welcomed, valued, and belong.

Yinfeng (Benny) Shen

Education Officer

education@supra.usyd.edu.au

SUPRA

Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association

02 9351 3715

admin@supra.usyd.edu.au

www.supra.net.au

Level 2, Holme Building (A09)
Science Rd, University of Sydney NSW 2006