The Hon Clare O’Neil MP, Minister for Home Affairs, Minister for Cyber Security

The Hon Andrew Giles MP, Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs

**Urgent Call for Reconsideration of Changes to the Temporary Graduate Visa Policy**

Dear ministers,

Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA), calls for urgent reconsideration of proposed reforms to the Temporary Graduate Visa (TGV) or 485 visa, announced by the Federal Government.

While welcoming many of the reforms which are part of the government's new Migration Strategy, SUPRA opposes the reduction of the age limit for the TGV. Education is a lifelong journey, unconstrained by age. The purported benefit of the reduction in the age limit for TGV applicants is not evidence-based and undermines the principles of inclusive education, equal opportunity, and innovation. Many early career professionals in Australia are already in their 30s and many graduates on a TGV do not want to apply for permanent residency so a cap of 35 years for applicants seems arbitrary and discriminatory.

An age cap of 35 years will disproportionately impact Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students. This policy will create uncertainty and potential displacement for mature students, particularly those with research skills who chose Australia for their doctoral and postdoctoral pursuits. The proposed cap risks loss of seasoned research talent and is unfair to individuals who embark on PhDs in their 30s, not uncommon, only to now be ineligible for a TGV on completion of their degrees. This is a direct blow to the vibrancy and diversity of Australia's research community.

Finally, SUPRA calls on the government to adopt a grandfathering approach to the implementation of these changes. Any reforms to the TGV should be applied prospectively, not retrospectively thereby impacting current student visa holders. Students who commenced their studies under the current policy should not be subjected to these sudden and drastic changes.

We strongly urge the authorities to reconsider these changes, recognizing the detrimental impact they will have on the international student community and Australia’s standing as a leading destination for higher education and research.

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President

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