



# International student pilots fact sheet

On 12 June 2020, the National Cabinet agreed to work closely and carefully to return international students on a small, phased scale through a series of controlled pilots. Pilots will be led and implemented by states and territories, working with their education providers. The Australian Government will work closely with jurisdictions to review their pilot proposals.

A summary of the key preconditions that international student pilot proposals must meet before approval follows. These preconditions are subordinate to other border and health requirements of a state or territory and guidelines provided by the Australian Health Protection Principles Committee (AHPPC).

The preconditions are subject to change as circumstances and the pandemic continues to change. A number of previously proposed pilots are currently on hold due to the outbreak in Victoria.

## **When can pilots commence?**

The timing of any pilots is a matter for state and territory governments and requires Commonwealth review. Timing will depend on approval from the relevant First Minister and Chief Health Officer, taking account of local factors such as airport arrangements, health screening and quarantine capacity. Local conditions and health advice are subject to change.

## **Who can participate in a pilot?**

Pilots are expected to focus initially on returning students, with existing visas, from a diversity of source countries. State and territory governments, in consultation with providers in their jurisdiction, will determine the student cohort.

Selection of students will be a matter for state and territory governments to consider in consultation with providers in their jurisdiction.

## **Which institutions can participate in pilots?**

Participating institutions will be a matter for states and territories to determine. Multiple institutions in the same jurisdiction, or across jurisdictions, may participate in the same pilot.

## **Do domestic borders have to be open?**

Any state or territory planning to progress an international student pilot must have its border open to domestic travel from other jurisdictions. Flexibility may be considered in the case of localized border closures, for example, closure to travelers from COVID-19 hot spots. These factors are subject to change.

**What conditions need to be in place at institutions?**

Institutions must have returned to on-campus learning with COVID-safe arrangements. Tutorials, workshops, laboratories and practical course requirements should be available on-campus, in accordance with physical distancing requirements. Student services and other infrastructure should also be open and available to students, and students should be able to meet with teaching and support staff in accordance with COVID-safe practices.

**How many students can participate in a pilot?**

Pilots are to be small in scale, with the size determined by the state or territory. Pilots must consider airport, quarantine and health system capacity along with necessary security measures to enforce quarantine. State and territory governments will take full responsibility for the mandatory quarantine process.

**How will pilots ensure a COVID-safe environment?**

Pilots are to comply with advice informed by the AHPPC to manage health risks, including requirements for screening, transport and contact tracing. Students must complete 14 days of approved quarantine on arrival and test negative for COVID-19 before exiting quarantine. Protocols must be in place with local authorities for management of COVID-19 cases among returnees. Any pilot proposal brought forward must have the endorsement of the Chief Health Officer of the relevant state or territory.

**Who is responsible for the cost of the pilots?**

Costs of the pilot is to be borne by the participating students, state/territory, or institution(s). The Commonwealth will not contribute to costs of pilots.

Institutions will need to ensure students are aware that they will not be eligible for financial support and may find it difficult to find part-time work in Australia.

**How will student wellbeing be ensured during the pilot?**

Institutions have a duty-of-care for participating students and are responsible for students from point of entry. There must be enhanced support for mental health during quarantine, including counselling, orientation, language, and social activities.