Media release: Exempt PhD candidates from changes to the Temporary Graduate Visa (TGV) age limit

Changes to the Temporary Graduate Visa (485) as proposed in the Governments recent Migration Strategy directly compromise Australia's capacity to attract talented global researchers, whilst causing severe disadvantage to high calibre Higher Degree by Research (HDR) currently studying in Australia.

The attraction of skilled global talent is crucial to growing Australia's research and innovation capacity now and into the future. Reducing the age limit for eligibility for the Temporary Graduate Visa from 50 to 35 years seriously undermines this goal. In 2022, over 40 percent of international PhD students in Australia were over 30 years of age. Consistent with the recently released Australian Universities Accord Final Report these candidates bring with them extensive industry knowledge and experience, making them an important component of Australia's skilled migrant pipeline. The proposed changes to the Temporary Graduate Visa (485) act as a significant disincentive for this cohort to choose Australia as a study and research destination representing a significant loss of future skilled talent.

The Australin Council of Graduate Research urges Government to exempt PhD students from TGV (485) changes and leave age eligibility at 50 years for this important cohort.

ACGR President, Professor Clive Baldock said *"The Australian Universities Accord Final Report highlights the important contribution that PhD candidates will make in generating the knowledge, skills and research that our nation needs if it is to prosper in the years ahead. Changes to the Temporary Graduate Visa (485) will potentially undermine this goal".*

The Australian Council of Graduate Research is the national peak body for those with university level responsibility for Graduate Research Programs (PhD and Research Masters) at every Australian university.

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