



Premier of Western Australia

Our Reference: 59-203831

Dr Ashis Roy
President
Bengali Association of WA
Email: communications@bawa.com.au

Dear Dr Roy

Thank you for your letter of 25 May 2020 regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on international students in Western Australia. I appreciate your support, and recognise the significant support the Bengali Association of WA have provided to international students facing hardship as a result of COVID-19.

International students are valued members of the Western Australian community, and the State Government is working hard to ensure these students are safe and have the support they need. This includes working closely with the international education sector, StudyPerth, the Consular Corp and community groups across the state to arrange a broad suite of support services for those international students affected.

The State Government has provided significant support to the StudyPerth Crisis Relief program to provide a safety net for students in immediate need of food and accommodation, as well as the capacity to connect students with additional support services, including mental health support. As you will be aware, each university in Western Australia has also introduced a welfare package for students in urgent need of assistance, including international students.

The McGowan Government has also implemented laws to prevent tenants from having to move out or being made homeless during the COVID-19 pandemic. The laws apply to all residential tenancies including boarders and lodgers. International students and other visa holders who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic on or after 20 March 2020, and are facing financial hardship are also eligible for the Residential Rent Relief Grant Scheme of up to \$2000.

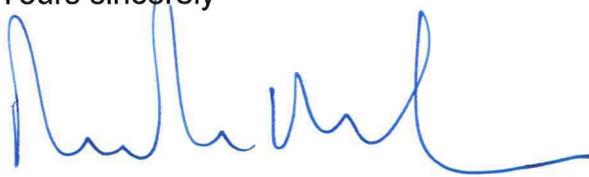
Western Australia also has a network of Jobs and Skills Centres across the State which provide free career, employment and training information and advice, including to international students and migrants. To find the nearest Jobs and Skills Centre, students can call 13 64 64 or visit the Jobs and Skills WA website at www.jobsandskills.wa.gov.au/jobs-and-skills-centre.

Finally, the State Government has established a \$20 million-dollar fund through LotteryWest to provide Crisis and Emergency Relief grants to organisations to support their communities through the COVID-19 pandemic. These grants have provided significant support to people experiencing financial hardship and food stress across Western Australia.

I would encourage you to share the information you have provided to me in your letter with the Western Australian universities. The universities have wide range of support measures in place, including services for student mental health and well-being that international students can access.

Thank you for taking the time to write to me on this matter. I trust this information will be of assistance to your Association.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark McGowan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark McGowan MLA
PREMIER

23 JUN 2020