



FARES FAIR PTV INFORMATION FOR MEDIA

Background of the campaign

- Victoria is the only state in Australia that doesn't give student concessions to full-time graduate students.
 - Every other state offers full concessions to domestic graduate students.
 - All states except Vic, NSW and QLD offer full concessions to international graduate students
 - NSW and QLD offer partial concessions to international students
- The University of Melbourne Graduate Student Association (GSA) has campaigned for concession fares for graduate students in the past, most recently in 2009.
- As the largest graduate student association in Australia, at one of Australia's leading universities, GSA believes it's our responsibility to take a leading role in making fares fair for all students.

What we're calling for

- Concessions for all full-time graduate students, domestic and international

How we're doing it

- Reaching out to Victorian university students and the wider community
- Asking for people to sign a petition to show their support for fair fares
- We'll use that support as a basis for lobbying the Victorian government to change their legislation and extend concessions to graduate students.

Who can make fares fair?

- The Minister for Transport, Jacinta Allen, has responsibility for determining access to concession fares.
- Premier Daniel Andrews has the power to make this a priority for Victoria.



Graduate student demographics and finances

Demographics

107,048 Victorian graduate students in 2014ⁱ

- 65,060 domestic, 41,988 international

Income

'Nearly 70 per cent of full-time, domestic postgraduate coursework students have a mean incomes of less than \$30,000, and 45.6 per cent have incomes below \$20,000'.ⁱⁱ

'The majority of domestic, full-time HDR candidates (59.3 per cent) have incomes between \$20,000 and \$40,000 a year, and just under a third have incomes over \$40,000'.ⁱⁱⁱ

One in seven postgraduate coursework students has an income of less than \$10,000 a year.^{iv}

'A fifth of international postgraduate coursework students' are on 'very low incomes'.^v

Income support

The same percentage (35%) of undergraduate and graduate coursework students have Health Care cards. 11% of HDR students have Health Care cards.^{vi}

Financial concerns

74.1% of domestic graduate coursework students, and 67.6% of domestic HDR students, say their financial situation is often a source of worry to them. 18.3% of domestic graduate coursework students and 12.8% of domestic HDR students regularly go without food or other necessities because they cannot afford them.^{vii}

Cost of public transport

10% of international students' total expenditure is on transport.^{viii}

'Transport costs amount to about a fifth of expenditure for both international and domestic postgraduate coursework students. Transport costs also take up a significant part of expenses for both domestic and international higher degree research students'.^{ix}

This is exacerbated even further by the fact that public transport fares in Melbourne are on average the most expensive in Australia.^x



International students

A lack of concessions for international students makes them feel less welcome in Victoria^{xi}

90% of international students say that the lack of public transport concessions would affect their recommendation of Melbourne to other potential students^{xii}

67% say that if they had known there weren't public transport concessions available, they would have chosen somewhere else to study.^{xiii}

57% of international students said they would be more engaged with their community if they were eligible for public transport concessions and so could travel more freely.^{xiv}

The cost of making fares fair

Modelling by Universities Australia in 2010 said extending public transport concessions to all international students in Victoria would cost \$51 million (\$30 million for undergraduate, \$21 million for graduate). Roughly \$1000 per student per year.^{xv} Modelling by the Victorian government around the same time said it would cost \$93 million.^{xvi}

International education is Victoria's largest export industry.^{xvii} In 2008, Victoria received \$185 million in GST receipts from international students.^{xviii}

A 2009 Access Economics report showed that each international student contributes an average of \$28,921 to the Australian economy every year.^{xix} As Universities Australia points out, this means that Victoria are risking \$29,000 in an attempt to save \$1,000.^{xx}

Key contacts

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Links

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FaresFairPTV/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/FaresFairPTV>

Web: <http://www.gsa.unimelb.edu.au/issues/fares-fair-ptv>

Petition: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FaresFairPTV>



Endnotes

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- ⁱ Department of Education, *Selected Higher Education Statistics – 2014 student data*
<https://www.education.gov.au/selected-higher-education-statistics-2014-student-data>
- ⁱⁱ Bexley et al., "University Student Finances in 2012: A Study of the Financial Circumstances of Domestic and International Students in Australia's Universities," 18.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.
- ^{iv} Ibid.
- ^v Ibid.
- ^{vi} Ibid, 23.
- ^{vii} Ibid, 57.
- ^{viii} Ibid, 99.
- ^{ix} Ibid, 99–100.
- ^x "Fares Comparison."
- ^{xi} Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development, "Overseas Student Education Experience Taskforce (Victoria)," 17.
- ^{xii} Australian Council for Private Education and Training, "Achieving Equitable Travel Benefits for International Students," 11.
- ^{xiii} Ibid.
- ^{xiv} Ibid.
- ^{xv} Universities Australia, "Transport Concessions for International Students: A Position Paper," 3.
- ^{xvi} Ross, "Fare Concessions Veer off the Rails."
- ^{xvii} Victorian Department of State Development Business and Innovation, "International Education Strategy for Victoria: 2013-2018," 8.
- ^{xviii} Universities Australia, "Transport Concessions for International Students: A Position Paper," 4.
- ^{xix} Access Economics, "The Australian Education Sector and the Economic Contribution of International Students,"
- ⁱ.
- ^{xx} Universities Australia, "Transport Concessions for International Students: A Position Paper," 3.