



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## We must guarantee training places for all

International medical students must be guaranteed training places in the Australian hospital system after they graduate, Australia's peak medical faculty body said today.

'The one-year intern training by any new graduate is, in essence, an extension of their university course, where they put into practice years of study,' said Professor Jim Angus, the President of the Medical Deans of Australia and New Zealand.

'The intern year is essential for registration as a doctor and must be guaranteed to all.'

Professor Angus said an increase in the number of graduates in coming years was not being matched by an increase in the number of training places (which are usually in public hospitals) and warned against any push to limited places to domestic graduates.

'To deny training places to international students is likely to sharply reduce the number of students who want to study in Australia,' Professor Angus said.

'This in turn would reduce the diversity of the student population and the cultural richness they contribute – and it would potentially threaten the viability of some university courses.

'Our international students are full fee-paying. Their contributions support our universities and enable us to provide a significantly better education for local students.'

Professor Angus said a significant proportion of international students - as many as 70 per cent in some universities - indicated they wanted to continue working in Australia after becoming fully qualified.

'Any push to deny proper intern training for those schooled in Australia makes no sense whatsoever, particularly at a time when we are importing doctors that often require retraining and assessment to fill workforce shortfalls.

'There is an urgent need for governments to act to ensure there are enough training places for all our medical students, including those from overseas. This is now a matter of priority, before it both affects Australia's universities and overall health system.'

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