

Accommodation assistance for ACU students displaced by Covid-19 crisis Proposal

09 April 2020

Current Issue

- International students currently residing in Australia on student visas are facing potential residential and financial crisis due to the Covid-19 (Coronavirus outbreak)
- Loss of employment throughout the casual workforce has seen many students become financially unstable, creating an inability to cover rental payments and living expenses
- Many of the countries where international students originate have been forced into full lockdown, including total closure of borders, in order to minimise the spread of Covid-19. This has resulted in international students forfeiting the option to return home
- Financial strain has also impacted the families of students and therefore financial support from parents/guardians has been minimised
- Limitations on international transfer of funds have also been enforced by some countries, resulting in international students residing in Australia being unable to receive funds from overseas.

ACU International Students

- In 2020, ACU has almost 4,000 International students enrolled, with the majority studying professions in health, education, psychology and social work
- International students are vetted by the Department of Home Affairs when issuing Student Visas
- Most of ACU's International students have undertaken a National Police Check and/or Working with Children Check
- Despite the challenges being faced by ACU International students, many are very focussed and determined to continue to complete their studies, despite the dramatic change in teaching delivery from face-to-face to online

Proposal

- ACU is providing ongoing support to its international students – those that have returned to their country of origin, as well as those that remain in Australia
- As an inclusion to this support, ACU is attempting to identify alternative low- cost accommodation options for students that are facing potential eviction or rental terminations due to hardship
- Should such accommodation be successfully sourced, ACU will work with providers to develop a tailored approach of management, based on the configuration of accommodations available, to provide short term accommodation of 2-4 months for international students in crisis.
- ACU's Living & Learning Communities will develop a mutually suitable framework to support the provider, which would include the following:
 - Residential Handbook – relative to the property
 - Rental Agreement
 - Incoming and outgoing inspection reports
- Living & Learning Communities, as well as ACU International, will be available to support these students during their time residing in these accommodations