

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**  
**Question Without Notice**

**Tuesday, 24 September 2019**

**C1186. Hon Donna Faragher to the Leader of the House representing the Premier**

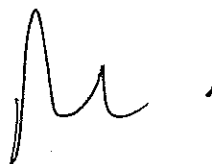
I refer to the article in The Australian, "*Foreign Students Abandon West*", (11 September 2019) which states "In June, Premier Mr McGowan wrote to the Commonwealth asking for Perth to be classed as regional for the purpose of being eligible to offer the new regional study incentives" and I ask:

1. Will the Premier table a copy of:
  - a. the letter referred to in the article, and
  - b. any other related briefing notes relevant to the Premier's request?

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**Answer**

- 1 (a) Yes I table the attached letter.
- (b) There was no briefing note prepared.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M', located in the lower right quadrant of the page.



## Premier of Western Australia

Our Ref: 59-110589/SH  
Your Ref: MS19-000351

The Hon David Coleman MP  
Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs  
PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

Thank you for your letter of 25 March 2019 regarding the 2019-20 Migration Program including next steps towards settling the Commonwealth's allocations for Western Australia.

I appreciate your advice that states and territories will be provided a greater say in State Nominated migration programs, including your advice regarding new measures to ensure migrants with the right skills go to the right regions.

Growing the number of international students studying in Western Australia is a priority of the Western Australian Government. Over the last 2 years, there has been a decline in the number of international students in our state, and in order to drive growth in student numbers, I launched the State's inaugural International Education Strategy. The Strategy was developed in partnership with the international education sector in Western Australia and provides a blueprint for future government and industry action.

I understand from your letter that the Government has proposed a second post-study work visa for international students who complete a higher degree at a regional university and demonstrate ongoing residence in the state in which they studied. This presents a serious adverse impact on Western Australia's ability to recruit and in particular, retain international students, because unlike other State/Territories the opportunities for international students to study in areas outside the Perth metropolitan in Western Australia, are extremely limited.

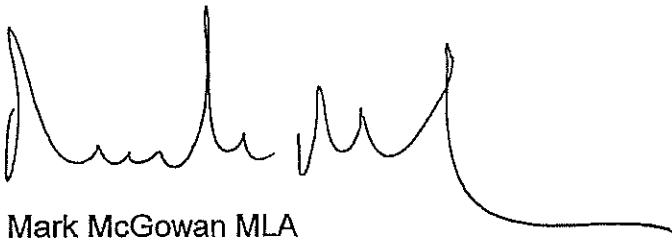
I agree that like Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and the Gold Coast, Perth should not be included as a regional area for the purposes of the skilled visas, but for purposes of international student visas Perth will be extremely disadvantaged by exclusion.

NSW, Victoria and Queensland are all home to a number of regional universities that provide opportunities for students, whereas Western Australia's universities are all Perth-based.

You may be aware that my office attempted to contact you to resolve this matter following receipt of your letter. Mr Graham Thompson, Acting Director General of the Department of Training and Workforce Development (DTWD) also wrote to Mr Michael Pezzullo, Secretary of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection seeking to resolve the issue. Following the Federal Election, I now trust you will be able to discuss this matter with me directly to reach an appropriate resolution between the Commonwealth and Western Australian State Government.

I look forward to discussing the matter with you.

Yours sincerely

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

Mark McGowan MLA  
**PREMIER**

-7 JUN 2019