

EDUCATION — INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

606. Hon SIMON O'BRIEN to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the minister's media release today entitled "WA to attract best and brightest international students", which in part states —

It is expected the changes will attract an increased number of high-quality international students to the State and help grow our share of the international education market.

- (1) How many more students does the minister want to attract?
- (2) What is a "high-quality international student"?
- (3) Will the minister be turning away fee-paying, tourism-boosting fairly high or moderately high students?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

- (1) I am not sure whether the honourable member was perhaps out of the chamber on urgent parliamentary business, but his colleague Hon Donna Faragher asked a question very similar to part (1) of the member's question. The numbers are still being negotiated with the commonwealth Department of Home Affairs.
- (2) We anticipate that the kinds of students who will find this program attractive are higher degree students—PhD, honours and masters students.
- (3) The third part of the member's question was about whether we would be turning away—what was the last part?

Hon Simon O'Brien: Fee-paying, tourism-boosting other international students.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We will not turn away any other international students who follow the normal processes of applying to study in Western Australia. It is worth noting that international student numbers in Western Australia have really plateaued since about 2016.

Hon Simon O'Brien: I thought they had dropped.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The number plateaued, if we take the whole lot. If we break them up, there has been a decrease in the number of students doing English language intensive courses for overseas students—that is, students doing the shorter English language courses. In terms of vocational education and training and higher education, at the beginning of 2018 there was a slight increase. If we take the whole lot and put them all together, yes, there had been a decrease. If we break them up into separate categories, there are quite different results.