This is a report on the current situation faced by Iranian International Students studying in Australia incorporating results from CISA Winter/Spring survey on Iranian Students.
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1. Executive Summary
In August 2012, CISA launched an online survey, entitled, *Iranian Students - Winter/Spring Survey*, to gain insight into how the situation facing Iranian students studying in Australia had altered since CISA alerted the higher education sector and Government to a problem in March this year. The survey attracted a total of 296 responses.

As a result of CISA’s initial work and March report, *International Students from Iran Studying in Australia: Report of findings from CISA survey into financial difficulties*, the Australian Government released a factsheet which clarified forms of assistance that institutions could offer their Iranian students. In April, CISA released a second report, *International Students from Iran Studying in Australia: Report of Findings from CISA Follow-Up Survey into Financial Difficulties*.

CISA has kept in contact with Iranian students since the April report and has remained concerned about the situation facing them. In particular, CISA is concerned about the impact the financial difficulties are having on the mental health of the students and their ability to study.

The most recent survey indicates that students are still struggling and that whilst contact with institutions has improved, the situation is serious for many. The student comments made in the surveys have become progressively more desperate with vast numbers reporting depression, anxiety and serious impacts on their studies and lives.

CISA is also concerned that students who have been allowed to defer their studies may be adversely affected by the “Genuine Temporary Entrant Criteria” at the point of application for an extension of student visa. CISA requests that the Australian Government commit to extend student visas for Iranian students in the instance that they have been forced to defer their studies due to the sanctions.

**Australia’s Duty of Care**
The exchange rate has worsened and the international sanctions on Iran have continued. Iranian students often report a sense that the sanctions are punishing the wrong people – in this case, them and their families. CISA is under no doubt that the sanctions are having a direct and negative impact on the Iranian international students studying in Australia.

Australia is either part of these sanctions or has indicated support for them. A discussion with a representative from the Department of Foreign Affairs earlier this year highlighted that Australian banks have long had a policy of not transacting with many Iranian banks. With full knowledge of this, Australia has given international students from Iran visas to study in Australia.

CISA submits that Australia has a duty of care towards these students not only because Australia is part of the sanctions but because Australia has readily accepted students with the knowledge that the routes to transfer funds were restricted. To this end, CISA requests the immediate intervention of the Australian Government to support the Iranian students.

The response to the Iranians has varied across institutions and student type. Prior to the publication of the Australian Government Factsheet, CISA was being informed that Iranian international students were struggling to lower their course loads because institutions were not clear on whether their situation met the National Code’s, “compassionate grounds”.
CISA reiterates our earlier request for the Australian Federal Government to take the leadership in co-ordinating an all of sector response to the Iranian student situation.

**Request for Establishment of a National Contingency Plan and Emergency Fund**

CISA similarly requests that the Australian Government formulate a national contingency plan to deal with any future national international student crises. Whilst CISA is very proud to have assisted the Iranian students and to have brought their struggles to the attention of the sector and Government, CISA submits that with a national contingency plan in place, upon being alerted that any particular cohort of international students may be facing problems, a system would exist to find solutions.

CISA submits that a situation in which a country is placed under strict international sanctions, in which there are significant internal uprisings, a natural disaster or the is a sudden loss in currency are all situations which should prompt the action of any national contingency plan. If international student representatives are able to look at these situations and realise that the respective international students from those countries may be affected, then there is nothing preventing Government officials in relevant departments from making similar logical links.

Finally, CISA submits that an emergency international student fund would assist students, such as the Iranians, and would demonstrate a compassionate and forward-thinking approach to international student education in Australia. CISA calls on the Australian Federal Government to seriously consider establishing such a fund.
2. Accessing Funds and Devaluation of the Iranian Rial

Since late last year, Iranian international students have been impacted by the reduction in the Iranian Rial – Australian Dollar exchange rate and the sanctions placed on Iran. In the research conducted by CISA in February-March this year, 68% of respondents indicated that they were facing troubles in transferring funds from Iran to Australia. From the respondents in this research, it appears that the situation has not improved, but may have worsened. Out of 244 respondents, 90% indicated that they are struggling to get money from Iran to Australia.

![Figure 1: Where Iranian students are able to transfer money from Iran to Australia.](image)

Figure 1, outlines where respondents indicated they were currently able to transfer money from Iran to Australia. Responses in other included transferring funds through a third party or through friends/family bringing cash to Australia when they travel here.

This confirms CISA’s original research which highlighted that the majority of students able to transfer funds through money exchange companies or cash.

Furthermore, since conducting our original research in March this year, the exchange rate has worsened, as demonstrated in figure 2 below. This means that even for those students who are able to access Iranian funds, they face an almost daily depreciation. Many students made the decision to study in Australia before the sudden loss in the value of the Rial. It should be noted, that for most students, the market rate is the actual exchange rate in operation, as it is not possible to transfer funds at the Iranian Central Bank exchange rate due to sanctions. In March this year, the market rate had increased by 100% in just six months.
Figure 2: Comparison of Central Bank and Market Exchange Rates

Figure 3: Universal Currency Charts - Iranian Rial since March 2012
(SOURCE: http://www.xe.com/currencycharts)
Figure 2 and Figure 3 show the worsening of the Iranian Rial against the Australian dollar since March 2012. From Figure 2, the market exchange rate has increased by 58% in just over seven months. Figure 3 shows that there has been a general trend of receiving more Iranian Rials per Australian dollar since March this year.

3. Financial Struggle of Iranian Students

In CISA’s latest research, a total of 185 respondents (88%) indicated that they were struggling financially and a majority of these indicated that the financial difficulties are impacting on their ability to study and on their mental health (83% and 70% respectively) as shown in Figure 4 below.

![Figure 4: Impact of Financial Problems on Study Ability and Mental Health](image)

CISA is very concerned that so many students are reporting negative impacts on their mental health and ability to study. We submit that there is likely to be a connection between the negative impact on mental health and ability to study. Table 1, below, presents some of the comments from students regarding the impact of their financial struggles. Many students indicated they are suffering from depression and/or anxiety as a result of their financial problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Student Comments on Impact of Financial Struggles</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Selection of comments on impact of struggling financially</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>“I’ve been stressful and anxious since last semester when all these financial crisis began, struggling with insomnia. I already had problems as an international student far from family alone in another country so all these just add to my worries. My family is also struggling to cover all the expenses here and this made them worried and anxious too.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“As the financial problems impacts on my health (depression, not able to concentrate) I see a counsellor every 2 weeks.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Family must sell valuable family heirlooms in exchange for money to support my study, living expenses.”

“It's a very tough situation. Every day we are expecting bad news. Everyday life is getting worse. I can feel the sadness in voice of my mom. You should live there to know what I say.”

“Well I can't focus on my studies since I have to think about my tuition fee all the time. I'm constantly thinking that what if I can't make it and then I have to go back to Iran and do military services and I have also paid around 16000 AUD only for tuition fee of first semester and OSHC plus many more expenses for nothing. I have to go back as a failure!”

“Working from 4 AM to 5:30 PM for a very little money to survive financially is NOT what I had planned to do during my studies. I have not been able to visit my family in last 19 months. They also cannot the financial support that they used to. It's a real pressure.”

“My family are facing deep desperation since I am struggling for my life. I have lost my social life and my level of health has been reduced since I have to work and minimize my living costs!”

“My family are worried about my financial situation and most important of all about my well-being. Every time they talk to me, they find me so depressed, unhappy and hearing from me the pressure I have after my fees has been waived and also the fear of running out of my savings very soon and need money to afford for my life expenses. I cannot enjoy life because of the same reasons I pointed out and I need to work, but my school is not really happy with me working as well as they are not happy with my tuition fees waived by the university. I am mentally in danger and my friends say that you are getting crazy. I am so sensitive to everything and the level of my tolerance gets lower and lower. I really need help.”

“The impact is to the extent that we are getting divorced and I cannot study at all and we are facing a tragedy.”

“I had to withdraw from one of my units as a result of stress close to my final exams. I experienced a nervous breakdown and accordingly I have been to counsellor at my university. All the evidences and paper works are available.”

“My dad who is 70 years old is killing himself in siri island in worst condition and I’m really worried about him so I can't really focus on my studies cause I'm so worried and sad ... I can't find a job and I'm frustrated”

As can be seen from the comments in Table 1, the financial struggles have impacted on many aspects of students’ and their families’ lives. Not only have students indicated that the situation is detrimental to their health, both physical and mental, but a couple have indicated that this has caused a breakdown in their marital and family relationship, they have been unable to visit their friends and family and their studies have been affected.
Those struggling financially indicated that the payments they are struggling most with are tuition fees, rent and covering other living expenses, as shown in the Figure 5.

Tuition fees, rent and covering other expenses are the three payments and costs students indicated they are struggling with most. Tuition fees and rent would normally be much higher than most other costs, so this is to be expected when students are facing financial problems.

In the section entitled other, respondents included transport costs, not being able to afford to purchase tickets to visit home in Iran, dentist and medical expenses.

4. Employment

In the research conducted by CISA in April, over 20% of respondents indicated that one of the preferred solutions to their problem would be for their institutions to assist them in seeking employment. Almost a third (31%) of those struggling financially in the latest research had a job at the point of answering the survey.

Most of these students, 42%, are working between 10 and 20 hours a fortnight. Just under a third (31%) of those with a job earn below the minimum national hourly rate of $15.96. One student indicated that they were being paid just $7 an hour.
The majority of 150 respondents (93%) without employment indicated that they want a job. The perceived barriers to finding a job are shown in the figure below. Not receiving a response on job applications, having no access to a car and not knowing where to seek work are the three most common barriers indicated by students to finding a job, as shown in Figure 7.

Problems such as restricted access to a car may be overcome by finding jobs on campus.

It is not clear to CISA whether students are not aware of careers assistance at institutions or whether these services have been unable to assist students.

In "Other", many respondents referred to not having permanent residency as a barrier to employment, a lack of local and job experience, the working hour limitation and study load. Table 2 contains some of the respondents’ comments.
Table 2: Student Comments for Other Barriers to Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection of comments for other barriers to employment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Because of my student visa, employers tend to go towards other applicants even if they are not qualified as I am in that particular job. Also most of the time they do not know the regulations of work with International students and some the jobs just only need 25 hours/w which is going to be 5 more hours but still can't get employed because they do not want to decrease 25 to 20 hours for you and they will move on to other applicants.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I am studying full time master of architecture. It is really hard to manage to work and study full time.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I have many skills but there is no institute in AU that takes a certification test without requiring me to attend hours of classes. So I cannot have a proof for my CV.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It seems that they prefer to have a local person work for the position rather an Iranian.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“No further response when they realise that I am from Iran or after interview and understanding that I am Iranian they refuse my because of not having PR.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Here in Australia all the employer want to give salary less than legal around 10$ to student and no one pay attention to our ability. As you know we are the master degree student and we can work in our field really well and help to industry and economy of this country. But the only job that they offer to us is some hospitality job. It is happen because all the employer just check our visa subclass and when they find that we do not allow working more than 20 hour a week, they do not interest to giving a job to us.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CISA is concerned that many students indicated that not being in receipt of Permanent Residency (PR) is a barrier to finding employment. CISA submits that employment for the Iranian students does not appear to be a preferable solution to their financial struggles as there are too many barriers. CISA is also concerned that so many students are either being employed at below minimum rates of pay or are reporting that they are expected to work for such rates by Australian employers.

5. Institutional Support
The research conducted by CISA in April indicated variations across the sector and student-type as regarded contact with institutions about the problems facing students and subsequent support offered. Figure 8 below, shows the contact between student-type and institution in CISA's most recent survey. It should be noted that only one ELICOS student responded to this question, only two high school students and seven TAFE students.

Most undergraduate and postgraduate students indicated they had been in contact with their institution about their institution, though 42% and 38.6% of postgraduate research and coursework students respectively indicated they had not had such contact. Overall, Figure 8 shows a marked improvement in rates of contact with institution than reported in CISA’s April research.
CISA - Iranian International Students in Australia - Winter/Spring Survey Report

Figure 9: Contact with Institution by State/Territory.

Figure 9 above shows the rates of contact between students studying in different states and their institution. An improved rate of contact from CISA’s April research is demonstrated with institutes in Western Australia and Queensland showing particular improvements.

However, CISA submits that since the sector was alerted to the issues affecting Iranian international students, the sector could and should have taken the initiative in contacting students. It is almost eight months since CISA originally highlighted the issues facing Iranian students and in that time we suggest that all Iranian students could have been contacted by their institutions. CISA suggests that a rate of contact with institutions of over 85% would be acceptable.

Figure 10, below, shows the responses students gave on whether they thought the level of support they had received from their institutions had improved since February.

Figure 10: Has the level of support you received from your institution improved since February?

Has the level of support you received from your institution improved since February?

- Yes - they have helped me with my situation: 9.8%
- Yes, to a degree - they have contacted me and helped me a bit, but I feel they could do more: 18.1%
- Not really - they have shown some intention to help but haven't offered anything helpful: 33.5%
- Not really - they have shown some intention to help but haven't offered anything helpful: 33.5%
- No: 5.1%
- Other (please specify): 0.0%
The majority of students indicated that the level of support had not improved (33.5%) or it had not really improved (33.5%). Only 9.8% students indicated that they had been assisted by their institution with their situation.

How would you rate your institution’s understanding of the situation facing students from Iran?
- Very good - they understood the situation facing me.
- Good - they had an understanding of my situation and were able to ask me relevant questions to fill their knowledge gaps.
- Average - they knew there was a problem, but did not understand it.
- Poor - they did not know there was a problem.
- Very poor, they did not know they had students from Iran.
- Other (please specify)

How would you rate the support offered by your institution?
- Very good - they offered support and solutions.
- Good - they offered support and some solutions.
- Average - they listened and were sympathetic, but have not offered any solutions.
- Poor - they did not know what to do.
- Very poor - I think they do not really care about me.
- Other (please specify)

Figure 11: Evaluation on Support by Institutions and Understanding on the Iranian Crisis

Figure 11 shows that students who had been in contact with their institution predominantly gave their institutions a rating of average (29.1%) or good (27.6%) for their understanding of the situation facing Iranian students. This compares favourably with the research conducted in April in which students predominantly rated their institution’s understanding as average or poor.

Further, Figure 11 shows that students predominantly rate the support of their institutions as average (31.3%) or good (26.1%) which is again favourable compared to April when students rated the support as average or very poor.

CISA notes the improvement but submits that in this time period the Australian Government has released a fact sheet and the institutions have had time to appraise the situation. Therefore, institutions should have a better understanding of the situation facing their students. With an improved understanding of the situations facing the students, CISA submits that institutions would be better placed to find mutually beneficial solutions.
6. Measures to Improve the Situation Faced by Iranian students

Figure 12 indicates that the measure most taken to improve a student’s situation has been to reduce their study load (41%). This would of course reduce the level of tuition fees charged to the students, thus allowing time for the student to seek other financial support.

![Figure 12: Measures Taken this Year to Improve Students' Situations](image)

Institutions deferring payment is the measure taken second most (18.6%). Again, such a measure allows students time to find other support. Figure 13 below gives an overview of the measures which students indicated would improve their situation.

![Figure 13: Measures Students Indicated Would Improve their Situation](image)
Predominantly, students are indicating that having assistance in finding employment (23.4%) and being charged the cost for domestic students (23.1%) are measures that would improve their situation. These two measures were the most chosen in CISA’s research in April too.

In "Other", students recommended measures including being given transport concessions, payment instalment plans, fee waivers and loans.

7. Student Comments
CISA is deeply concerned by the content of some of the student comments recorded in the survey. The breakdown of marriages, a student stating that, “life is useless”, and students generally stating that they are depressed and/or anxious are comments and statements that appear much more negative than those from previous surveys. Some of the impacts students reporting may have life-long impacts. CISA submits that action needs to be taken to improve this situation before the mental health and general well-being of these students deteriorates any further.

Table 3: General Student Comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection of general student comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;We need help. This is not our fault if the governments of two countries have some issue. I hate politics and as a normal person I am suffering that I do not have human rights like normal people.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“my wife, my son and I are living in a desperate situation. The Iranian government failed to help us and we do not know what to do.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“plz punish the government not my people, I have suffered enough disadvantages out of this stupid government”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Life was hard enough before sanction were placed on my homeland country of Iran. Sanctions have made financial support my family was providing almost impossible. I have received no support from my institution, I have failed subjects as a result of stress incurred by the situation, international tuition fees are incredibly difficult to pay compared to domestic fees. My best hope for survival in Australia is to be able to pay domestic fees as opposed to international fees. HELP!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It’s really stressful situation because my parents are on the pressure and I feel guilty about it.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I think higher education here in Australia could show some sympathy towards Iranian students, rather than just looking at them as a source of income. Interestingly, many of students here will form the human capital for Australia in the future. I do not understand why people from developing countries should be merely regarded as a source of income for higher education in Australia if this nation-state has any claim on humanitarian concerns.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Conclusion
CISA concludes that the situation facing many Iranian international students studying in Australia has worsened. It would appear that institutions have improved their support for the Iranian students, but more is needed.

CISA submits that the Australian Federal Government needs to intervene to ensure the wellbeing of the Iranian students.

CISA requests the formation of a National Contingency Plan and Emergency Fund so that situations such as the one the Iranians currently face, and the one the Libyan students faced last year, can be responded to with appropriate speed and direction. These situations are beyond the international students' control and require a humanitarian approach.
APPENDIX A - Raw Comments

This appendix contains comments directly obtained from the Winter/Spring survey for Iranian International Students Studying in Australia, 2012

A1. Comments on Impacts of Financial Problems on Student and Family

As the financial problems impacts on my health (depression, not able to concentrate) I see a counsellor every 2 weeks.

Can't sleep and getting depression

Conflicts

Depression

Depression

Depression and Anxiety

Depression- Pressure

Dramatically decrease of our national currency for more than %50

Due to the Iran's financial crisis, it has been really struggling for me and my family to fund my tuition fees.

everybody is under a lot of pressure, this matter has occupied a significant part of our minds

Family must sell valuable family heirlooms in exchange for money to support my study, living expenses

feel shy and full of stress because of suffering punishment of something that I have never involved on it!!

Financial problem makes me stressful if spend my savings in my account and I can't transfer from Iran

Having too much stress do not allow me to concentrate on my studies.

I am always nervous and stressful about my living cost and my future of education in Australia that I really do not know if I can able to pay my tuition fee for my next semester or not.

I am always nervous and stressful about my living cost and my future of education in Australia that I really do not know if I can able to pay my tuition fee for my next semester or not.
I am going an episode of depression and my family are so disappointed of not to be able to support me.

I am really depressed and I am not able to concentrate on my studies.

I am really under pressure, I live with my husband and my scholarship is not enough for both of us. we are really getting depressing.

I am suffering lots of unwanted stress due to this problem that not only has weakened my concentration on my subjects, but also has caused malfunctions on my body health.

I and my family are always concerned about cost of studies and living.

I can't focus well on my studies. In addition life has been gotten difficult for my family in Iran as they are trying to support me financially.

I feel like not to be supported in a country that about most of your friends are in the same situation as you and if you get seek or if you need an operation nobody will be able to help you.

I had to withdraw from one of my units as a result of stress close to my final exams. I experienced a nervous breakdown and accordingly I have been to counsellor at my university. All the evidences and paper works are available.

I have problem and i cant focus on my study and always nervous.

I have struggling to keep my mind on my study as me myself as a husband of family facing financial difficulties and my wife is, as I see, seriously is affected by the worry she has about paying this 50% tuition fee. Our situation is getting worse by starting new semester as AUD-IRAN rial has been rising since our last agreement with Monash that I'll be able to pay 50% tuition fee (which was their maximum offer at that time). I am afraid to say I strongly worry about this situation and my family's mental health condition in Australia which has damaged by these severe increase of AUD rate.

I really need to have scholarship or any loan from government to solve my financial problem.

I really worry about future. It's really destroy my life if i can't finish my study and i force to come back because of financial problem.

im depressed really bad

I'm stressed out and I'm always sick!

I'm under so much stress about providing money for my university fees and this has affected my studies.

I'm under stress and desperately looking to find job which looks impossible.

It endangers the financial security of the whole family, also our families actually go through a stressful time in ordered to provide enough support for university fees.
it is really effecting my studies because I really have stress about how my family will get this money they really can't afford it they are really struggling and that really made me depressed

it put lots of pressure in my head

It's a very tough situation. Every day we are expecting bad news. Everyday life is getting worse. I can feel the sadness in voice of my mom. You should live there to know what I say.

its stressful

I've been stressful and anxious since last semester when all these financial crisis began, struggling with insomnia. I already had problems as an international student far from family alone in another country so all these just add to my worries. My family is also struggling to cover all the expenses here and this made them worried and anxious too.

Leaving my study

make my family worrying a lot about me

me and my parents are always nervous about preparing money for my study

My dad who is 70 years old is killing himself in siri island in worst condition and I'm really worried about him so I can't really focus on my studies cause I'm so worried and sad ... I can't find a job and I'm frustrated

My family and have terrible situation about financial

my family and i have been under pressure and stress in order to take care of my tuition fee

My family are facing deep desperation since I am struggling for my life. I have lost my social life and my level of health has been reduced since I have to work and minimize my living costs!

My family are worried about my financial situation and most important of all about my well-being. Everytime they talk to me, they find me so depressed, unhappy and hearing from me the pressure I have after my fees has been waived and also the fear of running out of my savings very soon and need money to afford for my life expenses. I cannot enjoy life because of the same reasons I pointed out and I need to work, but my school is not really happy with me working as well as they are not happy with my tuition fees waived by the university. I am mentally in danger and my friends say that you are getting crazy. I am so sensitive to everything and the level of my tolerance gets lower and lower. I really need help.

My family have Struggling to support my studying fee, living expenses. I do intend to find a job but I was not successful so far

My family put a lot of pressure on me now
my family unable to sent money to me, I am worry about my education as because of when I arrived Australia, 1$ was equal by 1500 Tooman, but it is about 4000 Tooman now, I think if I cannot find a job, I have to leave Australia before I finish my study

My living condition is worsened, I have lost focus on my study.

My parents are not able to provide AUD anymore due to low sanction

My parents couldn't send me money because of the high rate of currency. So I’m thinking to leave my study and come back to my home town. Also I couldn't find a job. Because all companies need full time.

my wife and I are getting divorced and my son is getting depressed day by day. it is a desperate situation

no hope for future

Not in stable mood to study..stressed out.. Worried

Paying 26 thousands for my bachelor is really heavy after all the money me and my family have spent for CIT, rent, bills and etc ... so for sure it will effect my studying and my mental health, wish i had to pay the same amount money as Australian students.

poor is always poor ..........

Since 2010, the ratio of Australian Currency (Aus dollar) to Irans Currency (Iran Rial) has been increased by more than 2.5, meaning that for the only sake of the current political issues both students and their parents are facing a huge financial problems.

stress and depression

The behaviour of X institution is worse than the money problem by not only not providing any services but also their behaviour is also has became worse to Iranian, kind of racism, not giving admission and even for a friend of mine who had admission and paid, X has refused to giving COE

The Dentist here is too expensive! could not go to the specialist because they do not accept my student Insurance

the exchange rate is now about 3 or 4 times higher, making it impossible to get financial support from family

the impact is to the extent that wr are getting divorced and I cannot study at all and we are facing a tragedy

The pressure of working and studying at the same time resulted in me failing 3 out of 4 units last semester

The tuition fees have become such a heavy burden on our shoulders and our ability to study is hampered by this predicament

They are so worried but they cannot do anything and I can't focus on my research any more.
they have really difficult time and I do have it over here.

They were forced to sell some properties to help me pay my tuitions.

Things have been tight for my wife and myself (we are both students)

thinking about financial problems has made to not to be able to concentrate and under lot of stressed, my families are worried and concern about my future and they are also struggling because of trying to help me financially but they can not

this situation has impacted my studies, my family, my social life, we are worried everyday how to cover expenses for the next day.

too much stress on myself and my parents

We are both worried on next semester tuition fee (starting next January 2013) as Iranian-Australian currency rate have since increasing since last CISA report and will go higher too and we'll face more financial difficulties than before.

We are so worried because we can't cancel our plan

we are under pressure to transfer money

we spent a lot of money here, i don't know about future

well everything is getting more expensive back home, salary is getting less at the same time. then they are trying to support me at the same time when the price of dollar is getting higher and higher almost everyday. so it is kinda impossible to survive in this situation.

Well I can't focus on my studies since I have to think about my tuition fee all the time. I'm constantly thinking that what if I can't make it and then I have to go back to Iran and do military services and I have also paid around 16000 AUD only for tuition fee of first semester and OSHC plus many more expenses for nothing. I have to go back as a failure!

Working from 4 AM to 5:30 PM for a very little money to survive financially is NOT what I had planned to do during my studies. I have not been able to visit my family in last 19 months. They also cannot the financial support that they used to. It's a real pressure.
### A2. General Comments

1. I cannot receive money from my home country because of 2 reasons: 1 - My country is in sanction 2 - Exchange rate is very high. 2. I am PhD student and have applied for a lot of companies but none of them has replied me, I need a job and I wish I could find one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allowing Iranian students to defer their studies without paying to renew their visa.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An education loan for students who are struggling for funding their studies, because of their country’s current situation, can be very helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Costs of living is high here and working is necessary, if I can find an stable job would be better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could not find job regarding to my major. where ever I have been interviewed, they refuse me just because of not having PR after understanding that I am Iranian, but almost all of my friend from other countries have already found job without having PR since our major is highly demanded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently, Iranian students have some concerns regarding new sanctions that Australian government put on Iran. We are all worried seriously about our condition, and how it might affect our studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding a proper job will be big help for me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding jobs relevant to my previous degree usually needs Australian citizenship or 3-4days commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here in Australia all the employer want to give salary less than legal around 10$ to student and no one pay attention to our ability. As you know we are the master degree student and we can work in our field really well and help to industry and economy of this country. But the only job that they offer to us is some hospitality job. It is happen because all the employer just check our visa subclass and when they find that we do not allow working more than 20 hour a week, they do not interest to giving a job to us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I almost pretty much told you my ideas on previous pages, looking forward to hearing from CISA about this. Hopefully Australian government generously will come up with a practical resolution on this which will save many Iranian's family's condition!!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a Graphic Designer and had my art Gallery here. I want to work not study. I am pretty sure there is a suitable job for me somewhere here, so i am here because of that plus I love Australia :-)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I am a life scientist, has been studying and working on my masters project for almost two years. I believe that Australian government should care more about their international students, who spent more than two years studying in Australia and spending a whole lot of money with all the given financial problems, not disappoint students by changing the Australian visa and immigration rules all the time and putting students, specially Iranian students, in trouble. I don’t know how the world is going to end up by, I just know that we are trying so hard and do our best to do something valuable for human being but seems we are not get appreciated at all and discrimination is always seen among people.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Message</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am a PhD student with tuition fee waiver without scholarship. I work to have support at least a part of my expenses which takes time and energy from my research. Even a portion of the scholarship others get could make a big difference in my living in Australia.</td>
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I am going to leave my study because I cannot afford my tuition fee

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<th>Message</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am really seeking for help to find a job. If I find a job I can pay little bit of my living cost.</td>
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</table>

I am really worry about the future, can I finish my course? I have heard that the price of aircraft ticket significantly increase as well, so buying a ticket is another problem

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am under half scholarship for living cost, my CV get better and my performance was good in my university but university policy is not giving anything to current student because they assume that they did not have any option and they have to bear.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

I can manage my living expenses and most other things but really struggling with tuition fee.

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<th>Message</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I cannot find any job, I have sent my resume everywhere, at least if the university gives chance to Iranian student to work on campus and research labs, it would be a good way.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have applied for my tax return more than a month ago but it’s not processed yet even though it was supposed to take 12 business days. My application is very simple. It only includes my gross payment for last financial year and the amount of tax deducted, plus private health insurance options. I am not claiming any thing that makes it complicated.

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<tr>
<td>I have been in Australia for almost 6 years now, I did my high school here. Never had problem paying before. Always paid my tax and tried to be a good resident. I spent more than 200000 dollars in Australia till now. I have been here since I was 16. I know that it is not your responsibility to help us, but as a human we gotta stick together in hard times as well as we do when everything is good.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have been in Australia for more than 8 years, since high school. I consider Australia as my home country, and always wanted to plan living here but with the current situation am not sure if I can even finish my last year of engineering degree and try to apply for a PR

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Message</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have problem in receiving money from my family and difficulty to find a part time job</td>
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</table>

I hope the Australian government paves the way for Iranian students who are struggling with fanatical issues caused by sanctions imposed on Iran.
I just need a part time casual job near my university (Melbourne university) to cover all costs by myself.

I need a job! If anybody help me find a proper job I would earn my expenses and do not need further help, but also the difference between international and domestic student fees is massive. I understand that Australia accept student to earn money but I wish I could get some discount.

I NEED IMMEDIATE HELP AND SUPPORT

I need some help in order to finder a job to cover my expenses. Specially a job related to my course.

I need urgent help or I will have to simply leave... nothing else I can do

I really appreciate your efforts about Iranian students and hope these surveys end up becoming a very helpful tool to all Iranian students. I believe Iranian students are good students and they all are ready to contribute to Australian community after they finish their studies. Thanks

I really need help to cover my expense. my husband is also looking for a job, h also could not find any job,

I really need some sort of support since this situation becomes worse and worse everyday.

I think higher education here in Australia could show some sympathy towards Iranian students, rather than just looking at them as a source of income. Interestingly, many of students here will form the human capital for Australia in the future. I do not understand why people from developing countries should be merely regarded as a source of income for higher education in Australia if this nation-state has any claim on humanitarian concerns.

I think they should offer cheaper in-campus accommodation and job opportunity to Iranian students

I wish I had to pay the same amount of money like australian students, this puts me under so much pressure and effects my studying and my mental health.

I would like to see some help, specially for those student who plan to stay in Australia after they finish they study

If I can find a job I can pay my tuition but finding job here is really hard and I have to go to Sydney for find job. It means I have to waste 4 hours a day just for traveling to Sydney

If I don't work 20 hours weekly, I won't be able to take care of my expenses; On the other hand, working 20 hours along with studying full time are very difficult to perform specifically when you have a research thesis which requires to spend more time on than other subjects.

If it could be possible for the Australian government to facilitate the PR process for the Iranian many of our dilemmas would be solved

I'm always worried about my situation, there is lots of pressure.

I'm always worried and I can't concentrate properly for studying ;( 
I'm just hoping to find a job by the end of November 2012

It is my last semester of study. I don't need to pay tuition fee anymore, but I think the tuition fee is too high specially for developing countries. I don't know why it is cheaper for domestic students while we need to spend lot here on rent and everything but many domestic still live with their parents.

it is tense and stressful

It was very hard the money I dedicated to these fees last year with this currency worth 3 times lesser than before and it's illegal to take more than $5000 out of our country for every trip.

It's really stressful situation because my parents are on the pressure and I feel guilty about it.

just help

Just need to find a job then I think my life will change

Just wanted to thank you because of your attention and concern.

Kindly, please help self-funded PhD students especially those are from Iran. As you know, Iran's economy is in crisis due to the latest US and EU sanctions on the Iranian oil industry as well as national bank. For instance, just only during the first week of October 2012, Iran's currency has lost 57% of its value in the past three months and 75% in comparison with the end of last year.

life is so hard............

Life is useless..............

Life was hard enough before sanction were placed on my homeland country of Iran. Sanctions have made financial support my family was providing almost impossible. I have received no support from my institution, I have failed subjects as a result of stress incurred by the situation, international tuition fees are incredibly difficult to pay compared to domestic fees. My best hope for survival in Australia is to be able to pay domestic fees as opposed to international fees.

HELP!

Y university, my institution, and my department indeed assisted me with my financial issues. It would much to ask directly for more help from them, as it's not my problem not theirs, not even Australian government, so any help is truly appreciated. I'm just worried they financial assistant in near future ( next semester starting January 2013) would not be enough as currency rate will have been increasing. I'm currently paying 25% of my tuition fee which really reasonable, but due to circumstances I believe I'd face difficulties paying this amount too. I will try for tuition waiver for end of October 2012 in Y Uni. to waive my tuition fee as I have been doing really really hard to achieve the scholarship for my tuition fee, but there is no guarantee for that, and me and my wife are both worried on that it starts having its mental impacts on my wife as well as me. I'm recipient of living allowance scholarship $1910 per month, you might not believe, all of these goes to rental ( very small studio near Uni.) and bills and all other expenses, nothing to save for my tuition fee. Total 23K annually for living allowance is very least minimum for two to cope with all these expenses. When I applied I asked them according to Australian expenditures for two they could have offered more, but they said it's the standard amount of scholarship. Sorry to make such a lengthy comment, I'd liked to share my experience and
provide you with my 9 month feedback that may lead to greater help from Australian government which is indeed appreciated in advance.

My institution (The international students service) was so helpful and kind to me so far. They waived my tuition fees by putting me on a part-time program, but in fact they solved big part of my financial problem but by doing this I faced another academic problem with my college and school and my panel. I received negative comments from them about my work right after that which was really shocking and could have happened at the beginning of my studies. I have the feeling that if I was still paying the money to the university, there was nothing wrong with my thesis, but now that I am not paying my panel are so strict with me. I am trying to prepare what they asked me, but if they do not accept what I prepare, I have been warned with the cancellation of my project. If that happens, I do not know what to do since I cannot go back home with the financial and political situation of my country. I will face with political issues if I go back as well as financial. I am under deep stress and I am suffering a lot. I am trapped and squashed between the situations which are out of my control. Moreover, my tuition fees have been waived under the compelling and compassionate conditions.

my wife, my son and I are living in a desperate situation. The Iranian government failed to help us and we do not know what to do.

nowadays I'm really in a bad financial position & I need to solve my problem via getting the relevant job as my education or a loan or offering scholarship.

Please give me a grant for paying my tuition fee in curtin university

Please help me ASAP!

please support us with more flexible rules, specially about visa extension

plz punish the government not my people, I have suffered enough disadvantages out of this stupid government

Reducing the study load is not helping much hence money currency has raised twice as what we were prepared for. The uni fees must be waived.

So unfair

TERRIBLE SITUATION, MY LIFE IS IN DANGER

Thank you so much for your help

That would really help if I could get a study break while I am on student visa to work and save money.

The problem is not "transferring" money for me, but due to sharp devaluation of Iranian currency recently, the problem is not affording it

The support for Iranian students has been greatly improved by UNE and is greatly appreciated.

These sanctions from Australian government are addressing wrong correspondence. It just made transferring money for students harder, not to mention that it had direct impact on the currency rate.
they charge us alot. some expenses are much cheaper for domestic students comparing to internationals!

This is a really terrible situation for iranian students. I hope Australian government think about some solution to support Iranian students.

This is a stressful situation for me when im thinking about tuition fees due to being fluctuated the rate of AU Dollar in my country and decreasing in value of iranian currency due to heaps of sanctions on iranian economy. personally i have no financial supportive so i pay all expense byself from my saving, which is nearly run out.

This situation is totally unfair as most students have to suffer here because they do not find any way to get back as when they came they had lots of hopes to study and improve but currently if they get back to Iran they have to join the military program for 2 years due to their withdrew with Iranian education

Universities need to pay attention more about their students.

We are experiencing some of the most periods of our life. it is not our fault that Iran’s’ money went down 4 times as before. we are struggling and in need of help

We as international students really need help.

We need a good Employment Assistance

We need help. This is not our fault if the governments of two countries have some issue. I hate politics and as a normal person I am suffering that I do not have human rights like normal people.

What should I say!! just feel lonely

What we need is full time job.

Why AusTrack put a limit of $20,000 for transferring money from Iran to Australia? My Uni fee is about $25,000 a year + $15,000 life cost!

Work places hired Permanent residence more often than other visa holders