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Global people movement and the social protection needs of migrants:
International students in Australia

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Introduction

Between 1995 and 2001, the number of international students studying in OECD nations rose from 1.3 to 1.6 million (OECD 2003), and the cross-border delivery of education, via foreign branch campuses and in distance education modes, also increased significantly. Global demand for international education is fed by the growth in globally mobile work especially in business studies, and information and communications technologies (ICTs) (OECD 2002a), the desire for migration, especially to English language nations (OECD 2002b); and Asian middle classes prepared to invest privately in education (Marginson and McBurnie 2004). The growth in the supply of international education is fed by national export strategies, for example in the UK and Australia, and by enterprise universities for whom international recruitment into full-fee paying courses has been driven partly by reductions in public funding per student (Marginson and Considine 2000; Marginson 2003). This growth and diversification of student and university mobility is both reflection of and contributor to globalisation, understood here as the widening, deepening and speeding up of world-wide inter-connectedness (Held et al 1999, Castells 2000).

International education is a principal aspect of people mobility in a global environment, the more so because of its overlap with another category of people movement, migration. However, international education has so far figured little in the mainstream of research on international relations, migration studies, and global governance; nor has it been widely addressed within studies of globalisation, social theory or cultural politics, despite its fecund potentials there. It has a presence in the specialist literatures on higher education, and comparative and international education. Even there, the growth of the global market has outpaced research.

A comprehensive bibliography of Australian research and scholarship, and some international research, is provided by Harman 2003. Recent ARC-funded research mapped international education in Australia, including interviews with university

personnel in 12 sites (Marginson and Rizvi 2004). There is also some discussion of the tensions between commercial and educational/ cultural objectives (for example Welch 2002). Studies of the cross-border market focus on quantitative student flows, the forces generating growth in demand, and prospects for market growth and diversification (Bohm et al 2002); the strategies of differing nations in meeting demand; push and pull factors affecting student and family choice (Marginson and McBurnie 2004); cross-border quality assurance (van Damme 2002); on-line education (Cunningham et al. 2002); the impact of internationalisation on student services, teaching and curricula; and local/ international student mixing and tensions (Smart et al 2000). Work on cross-border regulation has been dominated by macro-level trade liberalisation and GATS/WTO; regulation in specific nations (McBurnie and Ziguras 2001); and the interface between international education and skilled migration (e.g. OECD 2002a; 2000b). Initially, work on the global education market was mostly within the education discipline. More recently it has been studied as a trade and investment issue, with scholars exploring the strategies nation states, regional governments and universities utilise to expand or preserve their share of the market; and the role of actual or potential global regulatory instruments (eg. Mazzarol et al 2001; Mazzarol and Soutar 2002). Others focus on the factors affecting student choice (eg. Pimpa 2003).

However, neither educationists nor business analysts have specifically researched the social and economic security of students. A few scholars have used qualitative studies to investigate aspects of security: e.g. Luzio-Lockett (1998) and Kirova (2001) identify how counselling and social work can help to ameliorate problems of cultural alienation, loneliness and other difficulties associated with being away from home. These investigations have not been extended to the broader management and policy issues, particularly those affected by the creation of a market.

Other starting points for considering student security are synthetic historical studies of the market in Australia (Marginson 2001; 2003) and Asia-Pacific (Marginson and McBurnie 2004); cross-country analyses involving Australia and Asia-Pacific countries (e.g. Marginson and Sawir 2003), and studies of the institutionalisation of protective devices in trade agreements (Griffin and Nyland 2003).

Student security, and student security regimes

Polanyi (1944) notes that social protection has a hostile yet interdependent relationship with the market. It checks the untrammelled forces of supply and demand. At the same time, it helps to sustain the social and economic reproduction of the market by regulating such aspects as labour practices, financial flows and provider licensing. In that sense, questions of social protection/security are significant in relation to any market (Chaudhri and Nyland 2002; Griffin et al 2004; Zhu and Nyland 2004a; 2004b), especially one that provides personal services, such as international educaiton.

Questions of social protection/security also take on particular importance for mobile populations, for whom, in a world of nation-states, security coverage is necessarily incomplete. In their home countries people enjoy social rights of citizenship, which,

though under pressure, date back to the beginnings of the welfare state. However, as a globally mobile population, international students in foreign countries are fully covered neither by their own nation's citizen-protection systems and programs, nor by those of the nation of study, which in any case differ from those at home. Notwithstanding trends to global convergence, we are not in a singular global environment. The nation remains the principal site of social and economic regulation. Multilateral protocols are modest, and bilateral protocols do not necessarily reconcile different national systems or provide for all possible eventualities which may place students at risk.

International students have rights as human beings, consumers and employees. The concept of the *social and economic security* of international students, as developed for this research, is broader than the conventional notions of social welfare, consumer protection, and pastoral care, that have previously dominated thinking about international education in Australia. As defined here, the concept of social and economic security draws together the hitherto heterogeneous concepts of safety, freedom from discrimination, consumer rights, pastoral care in education, and the support provided by families and informal social networks. Student security is provided by a broad range of practices including those in health care, welfare, access to housing, finance, legal rights, consumer protection, freedom from abuse and discrimination, and work free of exploitation. As we see it, from the point of view of the international student, her/his social and economic security is constituted by a complex environment, or regime, that consists of several overlapping institutional elements.

We identify four primary domains that together constitute the particular *regime* of social and economic security experienced by international students:

1. the formal state sector
2. global agencies
3. the semi-governmental university sector
4. informal sectors and networks (including self-regulation

These four domains are not always in mutual communication or otherwise synchronised, but they interface. We can identify a division of roles, constituted both de facto, and by explicit regulation and negotiation.

The regime of social and economic security is specific to time and place, and varies also according to individual student circumstances. These individual variations can be very significant, especially in relation to informal sectors and networks. In that sense, every individual international student experiences a distinctive security regime. Nevertheless – as the data arising from this project confirm - there are elements of security common to all international students studying in a nation (especially in relation to domains 1 and 2,) and also all of those at a particular university (especially in relation to domains 1 to 3), and also elements common in the manner in which the four primary domains interface. Because of this, we can conceptualise the regime of social and economic security at level for general than that of each individual. We can talk about the regime of

social and economic security as experienced by all international students studying in Australia (while noting the potential for variation within it).

We will provide a brief discussion of each of the four domains in turn.

Formal governmental mechanisms for student security

Laws, regulations and formal government programs provide for aspects of international education (e.g. in Australia the ESOS Act 2000, which provides certain governmental protections for individual students in relation to education providers; while also obligating education providers to police aspects of student behaviour on behalf of government, thus providing student security and student insecurity at the same time).

We note that the contents of relevant law and regulation and enforcement vary markedly between nations (Griffin et al 2003; Nyland et al 2004), creating lacunae at the interfaces between national regimes.

International agencies

Arguably, for cross-border populations, social and economic security emanates not just from national governments and institutions, but also from the prescriptions of bilateral, regional and multilateral mechanisms, e.g. the UN, ADB and World Bank, and NGOs in the relief and development arena. Social policy researchers discuss this (eg, Ramia 2003, Deacon, Hulse and Stubbs 1997) but the research has yet to be extended to international students.

Devolution of security functions to semi-government universities

In Australia, much of the function of student security is exercised not by government but by universities, within a framework of public accountability. For example, the pastoral responsibility of universities is not specified in detail by government, yet in practice the pastoral functions of universities, together with the role of informal networks, carry most of the practical responsibility of providing security. In fact this 'devolution' of security functions to the provider institutions is largely *de facto* rather than *de jure.* This subtle, understated devolution can be understood as part of a larger movement in higher education and other sectors, in many nations, that has been theorised as a transition from 'government' to 'governance', or regulated freedom (Rose 1999). Many services once the sole province of state agencies are now delivered by a range of state and non-state actors, including self-regulating market agents.

For governments, this reduces the financial and political costs of providing student security; but it also increases the stakes in the security regime - given Polanyi's point about balancing the market. Further, students paying fees purchase more than a degree exchanged in the labour markets. Education also embodies professional traditions of personal formation, pastoral care and maximum student well-being (Marginson 1997). Thus in passing security provision to universities, the state deploys, from a distance, a pastoral tradition that pre-dates market forms. Arguably, this pastoral tradition performs a crucial function in the Polanyi balance that underpins the market. Yet it is unclear how much of this prior pastoral tradition

survives in a market where international students purchase education services from providers motivated primarily by profit. Precisely because the security functions exercised by university are (arguably) under-codified, the capacity to provide rights-style guarantees to students is reduced, and there is potential for substantial downwards variation between education providers in the circumstances they provide for students.

***The role of informal sectors and networks in student security*:**
Formal governmental mechanisms and 'semi-formal' universities are supplemented by civil associations, informal networks such as kin and local community, religious organisations, affinity groups; and home and family.

Because of the potential for gaps in formal coverage induced by cross-border mobility, and the problems occasioned by cultural difference, for international students informal networks are especially important. It has been theorised that East and Southeast Asian cultures are more 'collectivist' and family dependent than are individualist Western cultures in which more is left to voluntary self-management (Hofstede 1994; Clyne 1994; Zhu and Nyland 2004a): if so, this increases the potential for informal networking among Asian students, while also enhancing dependence on such networks. However access to informal networks and institutions, too, can be attenuated by moving across borders; and such access is not equally available to all international students, e.g. access varies by national origin, and location in Australia, and by personality type.

The importance of international student security in Australia

Due to certain features of international education in Australia, issues of student security take on a particular importance. First, market revenues from international education are crucial to Australia and its tertiary institutions. Second, student security is one key if not the key to Australia's long-term comparative advantage in that market. Third, and despite the second point, the security requirements formally required of universities are spare, and are mostly limited to commercial rather than pastoral issues. Australia has undergone a university marketisation, and consequent de facto devolution of security functions to universities and informal networks, that is radical by world standards.

Revenues
In 2002 there were 385,000 international students studying in all Australian education, 49 per cent in higher education, with 118,882 onshore and 66,176 offshore. Australia is the third largest provider of degree courses after the USA and the UK (OECD 2003). A third of Australian universities enrol over 6000 international students, and international students constitute one enrolment in five, second highest in the OECD. Universities earned 13 per cent of revenues from international education: over 20 per cent in four universities (DEST 2003), a high level of exposure. International student spending on fees, accommodation, food, living costs, entertainment, etc. totalled $4.3 billion (Nelson 2003b, p. 35).

Student security and Australia's comparative advantage

A number of factors affect student choice of destination including price and living cost, travel distance, security, language, degree quality, graduate opportunities and migration potential. East and Southeast Asian demand is primarily focused on English speaking countries. The USA and UK are most highly preferred destinations (Mazzarol et al 2001; IDP 2001), despite the fact that the US dollar and sterling appreciated in the 1990s, pricing many students out of these markets. A logistic regression analysis of Chinese international students (Mazzarol, et al 2001) demonstrates that a safe environment was the most significant predictor ($p < .001$) of Chinese students' intentions to choose Australia rather than Australia's competitors. Similarly, focus groups in Indonesia and Taiwan found many parents send their children to Australia rather than the USA because Australia is deemed safer (Mazzarol and Soutar 2002).

We note here that nevertheless, there is potential for Australia to become identified as an 'unsafe' environment to the extent that it is seen to fail to provide adequately for student protection from violence, or discrimination, or breaches of human rights. Hitherto, research exploring the global education market has primarily viewed students either as consumers or learners, rarely considering both aspects and largely missing the point that students are also human beings. For example, most international students are also workers, who have to meet fees and living costs and sometimes send money home. In Australia, most international students are permitted to work 20 hours per week in term time and an unlimited number of hours out of term. Varying arrangements apply in other export countries. Because international students are regulated by temporary visas, and some face severe finance and time pressures, they are unusually vulnerable to exploitation. Anecdotal evidence suggests many instances of students working illegally more than 20 hours per week (making them yet more vulnerable to exploitation) and at rates of pay that are well below Australian norms.

Australia as a radical devolution of student security

In Australia government and universities have adopted an almost completely commercial approach to delivery of international education, based on expanding market share, profit and full cost recovery (Marginson 2001; 2003). Arguably, the accompanying governance structure has diffused and fragmented accountability for service provision. In the multi-layered but fragmented protection regime, it is unclear when and where particular agents have responsibilities for many aspects of student security, and how they are expected to act in relation to specific needs. This can leave students vulnerable. Further, if devolution of accountability is apportioned to agents incapable of delivering the allocated task, students are again affected. In 2003, some universities formalised Critical Incident Procedures to be undertaken at times of crisis, but even so, 'gray areas' remain.

For the most part national government limits its formal requirements of the universities to commercial considerations. In the late 1980s government was forced to act when several English-language colleges collapsed and their student 'customers' were left without education or fees. The negative impact on the reputation of Australian providers compelled new Federal legislation changes,

culminating in the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000, whereby education providers must secure registration, comply with a national code of behaviour, and contribute to an Assurance Fund to guarantee student fees. The code of behaviour focuses on such matters as fair advertising, and properly informing students before binding contracts are signed. It does not spell out the pastoral responsibilities of universities. This contrasts with the regulatory framework in a competitor nation, the 'New Zealand code of practice for the pastoral care of international students' (Peddie 2003). This code covers the educational and linguistic preparation of students; cultural sensitivity in recruitment; 'assistance to students facing difficulties in adapting to the new cultural environment'; supervision of temporary student accommodation; advice in relation to areas such as accommodation, travel, health and welfare; 'information and advice on addressing harassment and discrimination'; the monitoring of student attendance and course progress, and mandatory communication with students' families when students are at risk. All university staff and agents, including offshore agents, are subject to the code, which also specifies staff training. In addition New Zealand has established an independent public agency, the International Education Appeals Authority (IEAA), with the power 'to receive and adjudicate on complaints received from international students and their authorised agents/representatives' concerning breaches of the code (NZME 2004). The IEAA has published a summary of cases accumulated since 1996 (IEAA 2004).

Given the absence of an independent body of the NZ type, the Australian regime suggests the question of what happens when a breach of student security originates in those formal institutions meant to provide security, viz, government and universities, that have an interest in minimising costs, workloads and bad publicity. While quality assurance (QA) mechanisms trap some university pathologies (e.g. poor teaching is identified by using the student evaluations normed by QA), QA is premised on the notion of student as consumer. QA is not a framework for comprehensive security provision, including all pastoral elements, comparable to the New Zealand code and its IEAA mechanism.

The research

These issues have been explored empirically through a program of semi-structured interviews with 200 international students studying in Australia, and enrolled in nine institutions: the Universities of Ballarat, Melbourne, NSW and Sydney; and Central Queensland, Deakin, RMIT, Swinburne and Victoria Universities. The interviews commenced in August 2003, and by September 2004 a total of 160 interviews (80 per cent of the total program of 200 interviews) had been completed. All students were interviewed by one of the authors (Dr Sawir), herself a former international student.

The interviews were typically of 30-60 minutes duration and cover a broad range of issues that bear on the different aspects of social and economic security: All interviewees are asked about basic demographic data (age, sex, course, national origin etc.), about their experiences in dealing with institutions and government, about their non-government institutional links and informal networks; about

language use; and about their personal and family ties. Students were also asked about their perceptions of security problems before studying in Australia. Other questions touched on such areas as housing arrangements and problems; financial arrangements, support and problems; health issues; language issues inside and outside the formal educational setting; work-elated issues and problems; and so on. The full list of potential questions is included as Appendix 1.

All interviews were conducted with the consent of the universities concerned. The students were selected by one of three methods: invitation to participate from the relevant international servicing office at the university; invitation to participate by interviewees themselves, to fellow students; or (in the case of Melbourne and Swinburne) student self-selection, whereby all international students receive a notification of the project and were invited to make themselves available for interview. Arguably, these various methods introduced potential for bias – e.g. students selected by international offices might tend to be less critical of the university than some others; self-selection methods might invite students with an axe to grind). However, given the size of the interview population (200) relative to the total number of on-shore international students in Australian higher education (over 100,000), plus the logistical difficulties of exercising a random selection across that whole population, the researchers decided not to chase the chimera of a representative sample. Rather, they sought to ensure that the group of interviewees from each institution would exhibit a range of national origins, ages, fields of study, course levels and course types (undergraduate/ postgraduate) and that the overall numbers of women and men would be roughly in balance. No interviews were conducted with students in their first semester of study in an Australian university, as it was felt that they would be insufficiently experienced to provide useful data in many of the areas covered by the questions.

The project is funded by the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements (ISGM). This is a cross-faculty initiative by the University, supporting research projects in a range of areas bearing on globalisation. One part of the ISGM's work is a program of three research projects concerned with the social protection of populations moving across borders – the three projects cover workers (with a focus on cross-border movement in Africa), businesspeople (with a focus on regulatory regimes affecting cross-border movement in China), and international students (with a focus on students moving into Australia for study purposes).

Characteristics of the students interviewed

[at the time of submission of this paper 160 of the 200 interviews were completed. Data analysis commences at the completion of the interviews. The first stage of analysis takes place between mid October and mid November. The summary of the characteristics of the students interviewed will be tabled at the ISANA conference].

Preliminary research findings

[at the time of submission of this paper 160 of the 200 interviews were completed. Data analysis commences at the completion of the interviews. The first stage of analysis takes

place between mid October and mid November. Preliminary findings will be tabled at the ISANA conference].

Preliminary conclusions

[at the time of submission of this paper 160 of the 200 interviews were completed. Data analysis commences at the completion of the interviews. The first stage of analysis takes place between mid October and mid November. Preliminary conclusions will be tabled at the ISANA conference].

Further papers arising

As well as general papers such as this one, providing an overview of the results of the study, in future there will be scope for issue papers on the various aspects of student security (financial problems, housing, work-related problems, academic problems, experiences of racism and discrimination, etc.) as well as more conceptually exciting papers in such areas as the role of informal associations and networks; home language issues and evidence of the global role of English; the home/study interface; the role of universities and the limits of pastoral care; overlaps and gaps in student security arising at the interfaces between the roles of government, university and informal networks, and the potential/need for an ombudsperson or something similar, and/or global protocols; etc. 200 interviews produces a lot of useful material. It is more than enough for a full length book on the social and economic protection of international students.

Possible further research

This research demonstrates the potential for a further study analysing the role of social and economic security issues in student choice, and more closely defining and exploring the security regime. Such a study could compare security provision by agents motivated primarily by profit, and those contributing student security as a free service or at less than full market price. It might look at such questions as:

- *What social and economic security factors, that affect students and their families in relation to studying and living in Australia, are important in making choices about international education?*
- *What are international students' lived experiences of social and economic security; and what do they, and other relevant agents, do in situations of crisis?*
- *How is the provision of social and economic security divided amongst governments and state agencies, market actors, civil society, and families? What governance principles inform this?*
- *What organizational strategies and resources have (1) governments, and (2) universities put in place to provide for the security needs of their international students; and what weighting is given to market, pedagogical and humanist values when providing for student security?*

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Appendix 1: Schedule of interview questions

Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements project: Global education markets and social protection needs

Interview Prompts/ Trigger Questions

[Notes:

1. *Each interviewee will be asked only some of these questions. The different interviewees will provide varying data, e.g. some will have more to say about family issues, some about financial issues, some about language issues, etc. At the start of each Cluster of questions is a trigger question which determines whether the more detailed questions will be used. The questions may be significantly rephrased in particular cases.*
2. *The interview will be preceded by standard demographic and other questions [age, sex, national origin, religion, course, university, course level and year, years in Australia]*

Cluster 1: The interviewee and the interviewee's prior assumptions about studying abroad

1. Please tell us the country and region that you come from, and your prior educational experiences before enrolling in this course in Australia.

2. What led you to enrol in this course? (ask about family, scholarship and sponsorship, etc.)

3. What information did you have about Australian education and about studying abroad? Did you have any information from international sources? (ask about information from international agencies, including the World Bank, UN agencies, Asian Development Bank, etc.)

4. Were you conscious of any risks in studying abroad? In coming to study in Australia? (ask what were those risks, go into more detail as seems useful)

Cluster 2: Living arrangements

5. Are you married or single? (If married) do you have children? How many? How old are they? (Expand with questions on family, spouse and children and their needs, etc. If single ask about whether the interviewee has a boyfriend or girlfriend, and whether they live by themselves or with other people, how many, etc.).

6. Where are you living at present? How did you obtain this form of housing? Is this arrangement satisfactory for you? (expand on accommodation questions, where this seems useful)

7. How does this compare with your housing in your home country? If you were a student back home, would you get help with housing? Are the Government and other authorities more helpful here or less helpful than those in your home country?

8. How closely to campus do you live? Do you have your own means of transport? How much freedom to travel around Melbourne do you have?

9. Have you had any problems with your health, physically or mentally, while in Australia? What did you do? What medical services do you use, what medical advice do you access? (expand, e.g. are you prevented from using the necessary medical services because of limited money, etc.)

Cluster 3: Financial arrangements

10. What are your main sources of income?

11. Do you receive money from home?

12. Do you send money to your family or others back home?

13. How do these financial transfers take place? Is the money safe? How long does it take to receive money here? How long does it take for money to arrive back home?

Cluster 4: Language and language use

14. What language(s) do you speak in your own country when you are with your own family and friends? At work or in social situations? What was the language(s) in which you did your studies before you came to Australia?

15. In Australia, what language(s) do you speak in your house/ home? With your friends?

16. What do you consider your 'mother tongue' (primary language)? How often do you use this language when in Australia? How do you feel about this?

17. Before coming to Australia, how good were your English language skills for listening? Speaking? Reading? Writing?

18. Was any of your education in your home country in the English medium? How much? Which levels of education?

19. How good are your English language skills for listening now? Speaking? Reading? Writing?

20. Did you complete a bridging course, or some other course to assist you in the use of English before you commenced your main course in Australia? Was this preparation in English sufficient to meet your academic needs here in Australia?

21. Talking about the situation now, does English create difficulties for you in your academic/university studies? In making a verbal presentation? In following technical descriptions? In writing an essay? What kind of difficulties? (Expand).

22. Do you need someone to help you in your use of English in your written work? If so, do you have all the assistance that you need? (Expand, e.g. who provides this assistance? Is it the University, the Faculty, is it funded by yourself or your family, etc.)

23. Does the requirement to use English create any problems for you in non-education settings, such as using health services, your children's schooling, dealing with bosses and other employees, dealing with government authorities (e.g. visa matters), understanding documents? What do you do if you have difficulties with language in such settings. Who do you turn to?

24. Tell the interviewer of a time when you felt that you wished your English was better. Tell the interviewer of a time you were glad that your English was OK.

Cluster 5: Networks, organisations and support systems

25. Do you maintain contact with your family at home? Which family members? How frequently do you speak to them? How frequently do you travel home?

26. If you have a partner, wife or husband in Australia,does your partner fully support your activities and needs as a student? Does your partner assist you? In what ways?

27. Do you share the work in the home – e.g. children, housework - with your partner and family? In your opinion, is the sharing balanced or fair? (Please expand as required).

28. Who are the people you see most often while here in Australia? Describe your closer friends. Have you made many new friends while here? Is language important in choosing your friends?

29. Do you practice a religious faith? Do you worship regularly? (Follow up with do you have contact with other members of the faith?)

30. Are you involved in regular group or club activities? What organisations are you involved in? (ask about these, distinguishing formal organisations – e.g. university ones, AUSAID etc. from informal organisations, such as the student clubs. Ask about organisations' activities. Expand as seems useful)

31. Have you experienced periods of loneliness or isolation in Australia? (who do you turn to?)

32. If you were a student in your home country, would you get help if you were lonely or isolated, e.g. help from your education institution? Are the authorities more helpful here or less helpful?

33. Have you been able to make friends with people from other cultures while here – (1) other international students, (2) local students and others? If so, how close are these relationships?

34. Are there significant barriers to making friends across cultures? (expand)

35. Have you experienced hostility, cruelty or prejudice while in Australia? From other students? From local people? In relation to nationality, religion, dress or other matters? (expand as seems useful)

Cluster 6: Financial problems and work issues

36. Are you experiencing or have you experienced financial difficulties at any stage? (go into further detail if useful)

37. Who helps you if you ever have problems with money? (If no difficulties, ask Who *would* you turn to if you were in difficulties?)

38. If you were a student in your home country, would you get help with finances? Financial difficulties? Are the authorities more helpful here or less helpful?

39. Are you working or have you worked while studying in Australia? (expand, e.g. how many jobs, how did you get these jobs, which areas/ industries of work, what hours of work, how much were you paid for this work, etc.)

40. How did the bosses and the other employees treat you? What kinds of problems have you experienced at work (including exploitative rates of pay, over-long hours, unfair dismissal, sexual harassment, difficulties with language, etc., other questions that seem useful)

41. If you have problems at work, where do you go for help? Who can you talk to?

42. If you were a student in your home country, would you get help with work and work problems? Are the authorities more helpful here or less helpful?

Cluster 7: Dealing with authorities

43. Please describe your dealings with your university – not your course and your teachers, the other parts of the university - from the time you first arrived? (Expand discussion to include questions like, has the university been helpful? Has it always helped you when you needed it? Do the people understand you and your needs? Have you experienced any particular problems in your dealings with university personnel?)

44. Are you aware of the student services which are provided to assist you at University – for example student counseling, student health services, financial advice?

45. What would you do/ do you do, when the university will not help you with a problem? Where do you turn?

46. What do you do if the problem is in the university itself?

47. Please describe your experiences in dealing with your teachers and other people involved in your course (s), from when you first arrived. Are the people understanding of you and your needs? (Expand, e.g. what have been your main difficulties in teaching and learning? Did you receive help when you had problems? How has learning in English affected you, etc.)

48. What would you do/ do you do, when your teachers will not help you with a problem?

49. What do you do if the problem is in the course, the teaching, itself?

50. *[If a sponsored student]* Please describe your dealings with the sponsoring organisation. What does it do for you? Has it been helpful? Are the people understanding of you and your needs? Have there been problems? (expand)

51. What would you do/ do you do, when your sponsoring organisation will not help you with a problem?

52. What do you do if the problem is in the sponsoring organisation itself?

53. Please describe your experiences in dealing with the Immigration Department and other Australian government departments. Did these departments show understanding of you and your needs? Did they help you? Did they make things hard for you? (Expand with more questions as required)

54. What would you do/ do you do, when the government will not help you with a problem?

55. What do you do if the problem is in the government itself?

Cluster 8: Social risks and social protection

56. Think back to what you expected when you first came to Australia. You said before *[question 4]* that you felt there would be certain risks in coming to Australia. Has what you expected then turned out to be true? (expand)

57. Are there risks and problems you did not know about, or under-estimated, before you came? (expand)

58. How does living in Australia compare with living back home? What are the main differences?

59. Are you safe and secure in Australia?

60. What would you advise other individual students coming to Australia, about the risks and problems of studying and living here?

61. Should better or different information be provided to students thinking about coming to study in Australia, about the risks and problems of studying and living here?

62. Should better backup systems and protections be provided to students, while they are in Australia? If so, please specify what these might be (ask about study advice and problems, dealing with the university, housing, health, finance, work, family problems, personal problems, loneliness and isolation, difficulties in dealing with other individuals, difficulties in dealing with authorities, etc.)