



Our ref: AA1000554
Contact officer: Sam O'Connor
Contact phone: (03) 9910 9522

31/05/2021

By email

Dear Sir/Madam

UniProjects application for authorisation AA1000554 – interested party consultation

On 26 May 2021, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (the **ACCC**) received an application for authorisation from UniProjects Pty Limited (**UniProjects**). This letter is to invite you to comment. You are welcome to pass this letter on to others who may wish to make submissions.

Background

UniProjects is seeking authorisation¹ on behalf of itself and 14 universities in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory under the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth) (**the Applicants**). Authorisation would give the parties legal protection to engage in collaboration in order to create an international student travel corridor to enable international students studying at universities in NSW and the ACT to return to Australia to continue their studies.

The Applicants are seeking authorisation until June 2022. A full copy of the application for authorisation is available on the ACCC's [authorisations public register](#).

Broadly, the ACCC may grant authorisation if it is satisfied that the likely benefit to the public from the conduct outweighs the likely public detriment, including from a lessening of competition. The ACCC conducts a public consultation process to assist it to determine whether a proposed arrangement results in a net public benefit.

Interim authorisation

The Applicants have also requested urgent interim authorisation to allow them to engage in collaboration in the organising of flights to return international students to Australia prior to the ACCC's final determination in relation to the substantive application for authorisation. Interim authorisation protects the arrangements for which authorisation is sought from legal action under the relevant provisions of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* while the ACCC considers and evaluates the merits of the application.

¹ For information about Authorisations, please see <https://www.accc.gov.au/business/exemptions/authorisation>

Making a submission

The ACCC invites you to make a submission to assist with its assessment of the Applicants' request for interim authorisation and the substantive application for authorisation. In making your submission, please provide information, evidence and views about the likely public benefits, effects on competition and any other public detriment that you consider will result from the proposed conduct.

If you intend to provide a submission in relation to the Applicants' request for interim authorisation, please do so by **8 June 2021**. Submissions in relation to the substantive application for authorisation should be provided by **29 June 2021**.

If you wish to request an extension, please contact us on the details below as early as possible. Submissions after the due date (or after any extension granted) may not be taken into account. Extensions are not normally granted for submissions on interim authorisation.

Please use the coversheet that accompanied this letter and email your submission to exemptions@acc.gov.au, with the subject 'AA1000554 – UniProjects – submission'. Alternatively, if you would like to provide comments orally, please contact Sam O'Connor via the details at the end of this letter.

Your submission **will** be placed on the ACCC's [authorisations public register on the internet](#) unless you have made a request (with reasons) for us to exclude part or all of the submission from the public register (see [Guidelines for Excluding Information from the Public Register for more information on how to make a request and how we assess requests](#)).

Timetable

The ACCC will progress its assessment of the application in a timely manner. An indicative timetable is set out below for your information, and an up to date version (including any changes) will be posted on the public register.

Indicative date	Stage in assessment process
26 May 2021	Lodgement of application and supporting submission.
31 May 2021	Public consultation process begins.
8 June 2021	Closing date for submissions on interim authorisation.
Mid-June 2021	ACCC decision regarding interim authorisation.
29 June 2021	Closing date for submissions on substantive application.
July 2021	Applicant responds to issues raised in the public consultation process.
July/August 2021	Draft determination.
August 2021	Public consultation on draft determination including any conference if called.
August/September 2021	Final determination.

This letter has been placed on the ACCC's public register. If you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Sam O'Connor on (03) 9910 9522 or exemptions@acc.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G Jones', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Gavin Jones
Director
Competition Exemptions