



Event: Welcome to International students

Date: 22 February 2016

Location: Swinburne University of Technology

Speech notes

Vice-Chancellor Professor Linda Kristjanson

Welcome to Australia, welcome to Melbourne and most importantly
- welcome to Swinburne

I am delighted to know that we have students from six different continents here today. These include large student cohorts from China, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, the United States, Germany, Colombia and Ethiopia.

At Swinburne, we are proud to educate students from across the globe.

You may feel you are in a room with many strangers. In fact, you are in a room with many new people waiting to become your friends.

Australia is an ancient country. The original inhabitants of this land now share their home with a rich multicultural population of people from all over the world.

You are also fortunate to be coming to live in Melbourne – the second oldest and second largest city in Australia. We were the original capital of Australia – for a short time.

Melbourne is renowned for its parks and gardens, its mix of old and modern architecture, its love of food, fashion and sport – and for the quality of its universities.

We are one of the world's most prestigious education cities. Our population is growing rapidly. You will feel the energy, excitement and possibility of Melbourne as you make your life here.

And I think you will understand why Melbourne is rated one of the world's most liveable cities and a top international destination for students.

Now let me say a little more about Swinburne

More than 100 years ago, Victorian Government Minister, business leader and philanthropist, George Swinburne, saw the need for an

education facility that empowered, educated and inspired a new generation.

George and his wife, Ethel, worked tirelessly to drive innovation in business and education, to raise a family of four daughters and contribute to the public good through their many philanthropic activities.

We maintain those values as we look to the future, continuing our commitment to growth through excellence.

We strive to help each individual unlock the skills and capabilities required to transform their own lives and the lives of others in their community.

We do this by providing a dynamic environment devoted to excellence in both education and research.

The Academic Ranking of World Universities recognises Swinburne as one of the top 400 universities in the world.

And last year, for the first time, Swinburne entered the Times Higher Education Top 100 universities under 50 years old. We are also world-ranked for graduate employability.

Our overall placing in the top three per cent of universities in the world is supported by our innovative approach to research development and quality education.

During your time here at Swinburne, we will work with you to make sure you receive an outstanding educational experience. We want you to be successful in your studies, and to enjoy your life here in Melbourne.

In only a few years, you will attend a graduation ceremony to accept your award - in front of your friends and families.

We will join you to celebrate your achievements and your future.

Our first task is to ensure that you are settled into your course and your new life. We will then be working with you as you adjust to being a Swinburne student.

Let me speak more personally to you now. You might be able to detect that this is not an Aussie accent - I myself have worked and studied in three countries.

I have been an international student with a young family in tow, having a baby in the midst of my PhD program, having to learn new customs and navigate new places. I have missed my family back home. And so, I understand the mixture of feelings that you might be experiencing.

You may be feeling excited, nervous and a sense of pressure. You may feel alone and unsure of how to create routine and familiarity in your day as you start your educational journey. Let me reassure you – you are not alone.

We offer a wide range of services and assistance. I encourage you to approach your student advisor, and the staff in your schools and faculties, if you need any assistance whatsoever. You are here at Swinburne because we believe in your abilities and we will help.

Our job is to make you as successful as you can be. So please do not hesitate to call on us - any of us - at any time.

I know that the experiences of the next few years will stay with you for a life time and will change the way in which you relate both to yourself and to others.

You are now part of the Swinburne community. Enjoy this next life chapter.