



MISSION-BASED COMPACTS FOR UNIVERSITIES

The Australian Government will introduce mission-based compacts that outline the relationship between the Commonwealth and individual universities.

The Ministers for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and Innovation, Industry, Science and Research will work together in consultation with universities to develop mission-based compacts that define an institution's particular mission and describe how it will fulfil that mission and meet the Australian Government's policy objectives.

The substantial reforms being introduced to higher education in response to the Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education require a new relationship between Government and universities which recognises the value of institutional autonomy while promoting excellence, supporting growth and maintaining international competitiveness.

Compacts will facilitate alignment of institutional activity with national priorities. Rather than bureaucratic red tape and micro-managing of inputs, the Australian Government will work in partnership with universities but define clear and consistent targets for improvement and reform which will trigger reward payments. They will also be used as a mechanism for agreeing on performance targets for each institution in relation to quality, attainment and participation by students from low SES backgrounds.

Compacts will also facilitate a streamlined funding and accountability framework. Existing data collections will be reviewed, enriched where necessary, and will ensure that performance funding is based on sound indicators. The Departments of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and Innovation, Industry, Science

and Research will jointly develop with each university a compact reflecting a whole-of-university mission and a coordinated response to the Government's reform agenda.

Pending the finalisation of the new performance framework and establishment of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), the Government will continue to supply universities with a performance portfolio similar to that currently provided as part of the Institutional Assessment Framework process. Institutions have consistently indicated that the institution specific and comparative information provided is useful for their own monitoring and planning purposes.

Next steps

Consultations on the framework for compact development will occur in 2009. These will include close consultation with the sector on appropriate tools and indicators to measure performance at institutional level.