



Newsletter Issue 03 July 2008

## Review of Australian Higher Education—release of discussion paper and call for submissions

On 10 June 2008, the Hon Julia Gillard MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, and Emeritus Professor Denise Bradley AC, Chair of the Expert Panel for the Review of Australian Higher Education, jointly released the panel’s discussion paper at a launch at Macquarie University.

The discussion paper provides an opportunity for stakeholders from all sectors – business, industry, community groups, education and individuals – to comment on the role of higher education and how it can best meet the future needs of the Australian community and the economy.

The discussion paper outlines a number of issues on which feedback is sought, including social inclusion, resourcing, the student experience and links with industry and the vocational education sector.

The Review Panel, which consists of Professor Bradley (Chair), Mr Peter Noonan, Dr Helen Nugent AO and Mr Bill Scales AO, is currently conducting a program of national consultations with key stakeholders which commenced shortly after the release of the discussion paper.

The discussion paper and information on making a submission are available at [www.dest.gov.au/herereview](http://www.dest.gov.au/herereview). Submissions close on **31 July 2008**.

Please note that all submissions will be posted on the Review’s website.

**Contact:** [HEreview@deewr.gov.au](mailto:HEreview@deewr.gov.au)

## Transfer of administrative responsibilities

### Capital Development Pool (CDP), Better Universities Renewal Funding (BURF) and Higher Education Special Capital Projects

Responsibility for administering the CDP, BURF and Higher Education Special Capital Projects has been transferred from the Funding and Student Support Branch to the Infrastructure and Endowment Branch in DEEWR’s Higher Education Group\*. All correspondence regarding these programs can continue to be forwarded to [CDP@Deewr.gov.au](mailto:CDP@Deewr.gov.au).

**Contact:** Terry Bowditch (Director, Policy and Programs 2) on (02) 6219 3582.

\* Branch contact details for the Higher Education Group are available on pages 5 and 6.

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## Changes to higher education legislation and guidelines

Two pieces of legislation were introduced in Parliament earlier this year that impact on the higher education sector. Parliament rose for the 2008 Winter sitting period on 26 June 2008 and is scheduled to resume on 26 August 2008 for the Spring sitting period.

### ***Higher Education Support Amendment (2008 Budget Measures) Act 2008***

The *Higher Education Support Amendment (2008 Budget Measures) Bill 2008* received Royal Assent on 25 June 2008 giving effect to the Government's election commitments which were included as measures in the 2008-09 Budget.

This includes appropriations for the Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS), Other Grants and Commonwealth Scholarships. The amendment also:

- reduces the maximum annual student contribution amount for certain students undertaking mathematics, statistics and science units of study and establishes a new Transitional Loading under the CGS to compensate provider for the lower revenue;
- gives effect to the phasing out of full fee paying domestic undergraduate places at Table A providers; and
- provides for the new HECS-HELP benefit for mathematics and science graduates and early childhood education teachers.

Related guidelines under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) will be amended accordingly.

The *Administrative Information for Higher Education Providers: Student support* ('the AIP') and the *Administrative Information for Providers: Commonwealth Grant Scheme* will be revised to reflect the amended legislation.

A draft amendment to the CGS guidelines for the Transitional Loading will be circulated shortly for comment.

### ***Higher Education Support Amendment (Removal of the Higher Education Workplace Relations Requirements and National Governance Protocols Requirements and Other Matters) Bill 2008***

The *Higher Education Support Amendment (Removal of the Higher Education Workplace Relations Requirements and National Governance Protocols Requirements and Other Matters) Bill 2008* was passed by the House of Representatives on 14 May 2008 unamended. Subject to the Bill's passage through the Senate, HESA will be amended by repealing the Higher Education

Workplace Relations Requirements, which include the requirement for higher education providers to offer Australian Workplace Agreements to their employees.

The Bill also includes the removal the National Governance Protocols, which impose governance conditions on providers.

The Bill is expected to be considered by the Senate when Parliament resumes for the Spring sitting period.

**Contact:** Rachel O'Neill (Assistant Director, Policy and Parliamentary Unit) on (02) 6219 3497 or at [rachel.o'neill@deewr.gov.au](mailto:rachel.o'neill@deewr.gov.au).

## Institution Assessment Framework for 2008

Universities have recently been asked to provide information about their strategic direction, financial performance, equity initiatives, indigenous education and research activities, for the 2008 Institution Assessment Framework (IAF).

The IAF is the accountability framework for higher education institutions listed on Table A of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. It involves submissions from universities through the IAF Information Collection (IAFIC), production of an IAF Portfolio, and biennial discussions between the Government and universities.

As a result of government portfolio changes from 2008, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) will manage the IAF process in partnership with the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR). DEEWR has administrative responsibility for the education aspects of the IAF and DIISR has administrative responsibility for the research, research training and innovation aspects of the process.

Copies of the Instructions for the preparation of the 2008 IAF, and other relevant documents are available at [www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher\\_education/policy\\_issues\\_reviews/key\\_issues/institution\\_assessment\\_framework.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/policy_issues_reviews/key_issues/institution_assessment_framework.htm).

Most material required for the 2008 IAF is due on **25 July 2008**. The exception is the Indigenous Education Statement which was due on **30 June 2008**. Advice on the Indigenous Education Statement is available at [www.dest.gov.au/sectors/indigenous\\_education/programmes\\_funding/indigenous\\_education\\_statements.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/indigenous_education/programmes_funding/indigenous_education_statements.htm).

**Contact:** Karen Welsh (Director, Performance Assessment Unit) on (02) 6219 3571 or at [karen.welsh@deewr.gov.au](mailto:karen.welsh@deewr.gov.au).



## 2009 Higher Education Infrastructure Funding round opens

On 6 June 2008, the Minister for Education, the Hon Julia Gillard MP, and the Minister for Innovation, Senator Kim Carr announced the opening of the 2009 round of funding for higher education infrastructure investment.

\$304 million is available for new research facilities or capital expenditure in Australia's universities. These funds will be made available as an initial allocation from the Government's new Education Investment Fund in 2009-10.

The funding round is being conducted in accordance with directions issued by the Ministers. The Higher Education Endowment Fund (HEEF) *Application and Assessment Procedures for the 2009 Funding Round* is available from the [HEEF website](#). The Procedures, which were developed by the HEEF Advisory Board, take into account feedback from the Board's extensive consultations with the higher education sector.

Higher education institutions are encouraged to submit expressions of interest for project funding, outlining strategic plans for infrastructure improvement to enhance their teaching, learning, research and/or research training capacity.

Expressions of interest for funding close at 5 pm (AEST) on 14 August 2008. These submissions will be considered, and those short-listed will be invited to submit full applications. Successful projects will be announced in July 2009.

Full details of the funding round are available at [www.heef.deewr.gov.au](http://www.heef.deewr.gov.au). Any queries should be directed to [heef@deewr.gov.au](mailto:heef@deewr.gov.au).

## VET FEE-HELP

VET FEE-HELP is an extension of the higher education income contingent loan scheme, FEE-HELP. The VET FEE-HELP loan scheme is being introduced to the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector during 2008.

VET FEE-HELP will assist eligible full fee paying students who are enrolled in one of the following VET accredited courses through a VET provider (a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) approved to offer VET FEE-HELP to its students) to help pay for all or part of their tuition fees:

- Diploma\*
- Advanced Diploma\*
- Graduate Certificate
- Graduate Diploma

\* with a credit transfer to a bachelor degree with a higher education provider.

Legislative amendments to the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) received Royal Assent on 20 March 2008.

The legislative guidelines for VET FEE-HELP are now available on the VET FEE-HELP website at [www.dest.gov.au/VET/VETFEEHELP](http://www.dest.gov.au/VET/VETFEEHELP).

### *How do I apply to become a VET Provider?*

Electronic lodgement of applications to apply to become a VET provider will be available on the VET FEE-HELP website from mid-July 2008.

For further information, contact the Call Centre on 13 38 73 or send your query to the VET FEE-HELP mailbox at [VETFEEHELP@deewr.gov.au](mailto:VETFEEHELP@deewr.gov.au).

## Diversity and Structural Adjustment Fund – 2008 funding round

A positive response was received from the higher education sector to the request for expressions of interest (EOI) as part of the first stage of the application process for grants under the Australian Government's Diversity and Structural Adjustment Fund (Diversity Fund). The EOIs are currently being assessed and it is anticipated that the results of the assessment and invitations for full applications will be announced by the Minister for Education in August 2008.

The Diversity Fund's objective is to promote structural reform in universities that leads to greater specialisation, more diversity in the higher education sector and better responsiveness to labour markets operating in the local or national interest. Further information about the Diversity Fund is available at [www.dest.gov.au/highered/dsa](http://www.dest.gov.au/highered/dsa).

**Contact:** Melissa Pollard (Director, Collaboration Unit) on telephone (02) 6219 3563. Emails should be sent to: [dsa@deewr.gov.au](mailto:dsa@deewr.gov.au).



## Changes to the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund

Last month, Minister for Education, announced that the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF) would reward improvement as well as excellence in learning and teaching for undergraduates, providing up to \$74 million to universities in 2009.

Rewarding improvement will provide an incentive for all universities to achieve better learning and teaching outcomes over time. The Government will also continue to reward excellence to acknowledge those universities whose performance is exceptional.

The LTPF Advisory Group, made up of university representatives, has been working with the Department on options for measuring improvement. Universities have been provided with the information about the proposed process and have until 11 July 2008 to comment. Further details are available on the Department's website at [www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher\\_education/policy\\_issues\\_reviews/key\\_issues/learning\\_teaching/ltpf/default.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/policy_issues_reviews/key_issues/learning_teaching/ltpf/default.htm).

**Contact:** Julie Birmingham (Director, Teaching & Learning Unit) on (02) 6219 3545 or at [julie.birmingham@deewr.gov.au](mailto:julie.birmingham@deewr.gov.au).



## Higher Education Providers

As of 13 June 2008, 65 non self-accrediting institutions (private providers) and one self-accrediting institution have been approved under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) to offer FEE-HELP on behalf of their eligible students.

A list of the providers can be found at [www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher\\_education/programmes\\_funding/forms\\_guidelines/higher\\_education\\_providers.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/programmes_funding/forms_guidelines/higher_education_providers.htm).

The providers approved to date offer a variety of higher education courses in a range of fields including education, theological training, design, dramatic art, business, legal practice, media studies, architecture, youth work, health sciences, arts management, hotel management, viticulture, applied aquaculture, equine studies, counselling and information technology.

## Useful Links

Below are a number of **links** to **useful** information found on the DEEWR website and elsewhere.

### Reviews

- Review of Australian Higher Education: [www.dest.gov.au/hereview](http://www.dest.gov.au/hereview)
- Review of the National Innovation System: [www.innovation.gov.au/innovationreview](http://www.innovation.gov.au/innovationreview)

### International links

- [Australian Education International \(AEI\)](#): integrates the development of international government relations with support for the commercial activities of Australia's education community. To do this, AEI liaises with all sectors of the education and training industry and all levels of government.

### Links for students going to university

- [Going to Uni](#) (for domestic students): [www.goingtouni.gov.au](http://www.goingtouni.gov.au)  
A comprehensive guide on going to Australian universities for current and prospective students and their families.
- [Study in Australia](#) (for international students): [www.studyinaustralia.gov.au](http://www.studyinaustralia.gov.au)  
Provides advice on study in Australia. Here you will find reliable information about courses, institutions, study and living costs, the application process and visa requirements.

## APEC Workshop on embedding entrepreneurship in university curriculum: 22-23 July, 2008 Sunway Hotel, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

Vietnam's Ministry of Industry and Trade has invited participation in a Workshop aimed at raising awareness on training university-level students in entrepreneurship skills.

Governments of the 21 APEC member economies have each been invited to nominate up to two participants to attend and actively participate in the Workshop. The Workshop will be presented in English by international and APEC education experts and University lecturers.

**Contact:** For agenda and other information on the Workshop, please contact Brett Pattinson at [brett.pattinson@deewr.gov.au](mailto:brett.pattinson@deewr.gov.au).



## Higher Education Group Contact Details

The Higher Education Group is located on levels 2, 3 and 4 of Novell House, 71 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra ACT 2601. The general DEEWR switchboard number is **(02) 6240 8111**.

Name and Branch	Areas of responsibility	Contact details
<p><b>MR COLIN WALTERS</b> Group Manager Higher Education Group</p>	<p>The <b>Higher Education Group</b> contributes to the development and maintenance of a strong, diverse higher education system that contributes to Australia's social and economic need for a highly educated population and skilled labour force.</p> <p>The Group administers programs that support teaching and learning activities, infrastructure, and philanthropy within higher education institutions. It reports on the state and performance of the higher education system, and provides policy advice on the future direction of higher education.</p>	<p>Ph: 02 6219 3564 Email: <a href="mailto:colin.walters@deewr.gov.au">colin.walters@deewr.gov.au</a></p> <p>Postal address: Location 031 GPO Box 9880 CANBERRA ACT 2601</p>
<p><b>DR CAROLINE PERKINS</b> Branch Manager Equity and Structural Reform Branch</p>	<p>The <b>Equity and Structural Reform Branch</b> develops policy and delivers programs to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve equity of access for identified target groups through the Higher Education Equity Support Program, the Disability Support Program and the Commonwealth Scholarships;</li> <li>• encourage universities to manage their workplace relations in keeping with the Australian Government's workplace relations policies and strengthen their ability to manage workplace change through the Workplace Productivity Program; and</li> <li>• improve collaboration between universities, other institutions, business and the community through the Business Industry Higher Education Collaboration Council and the Diversity and Structural Adjustment Fund.</li> </ul> <p>The Branch also manages the development and implementation of the Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU) Transition Fund, the recent review of the impact of VSU, and provides Secretariat support to the Business Industry Higher Education Collaboration Council.</p>	<p>Ph: 02 6219 3560 Email: <a href="mailto:caroline.perkins@deewr.gov.au">caroline.perkins@deewr.gov.au</a></p> <p>Postal address: Location 033 GPO Box 9880 CANBERRA ACT 2601</p>
<p><b>MR ROD MANNS</b> Branch Manager Funding and Student Support Branch</p>	<p>The <b>Funding and Student Support Branch</b> provides strategic advice on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the financial sustainability and governance of higher education providers (including financial reporting);</li> <li>• the allocation of and funding for non-research student places;</li> <li>• student contributions and fees for higher education courses; and</li> <li>• the assistance available to students to pay their student contributions and tuition fees.</li> </ul> <p>It administers the Commonwealth Grant Scheme (including Funding Agreements), National Institutes Program, Higher Education Superannuation Program, Higher Education Special Projects Program, the Higher Education Loan Program (HECS-HELP, FEE-HELP and OS-HELP) and a program to support universities to encourage small businesses to provide services on regional campuses.</p>	<p>Ph: 02 6219 3548 Email: <a href="mailto:rod.manns@deewr.gov.au">rod.manns@deewr.gov.au</a></p> <p>Postal address: Location 021 GPO Box 9880 CANBERRA ACT 2601</p>



## Higher Education Group Contact Details (cont'd)

Name and Branch	Areas of responsibility	Contact details
<p><b>MS JULIE RANDALL</b> Branch Manager Infrastructure and Endowment Branch</p>	<p>The <b>Infrastructure and Endowment Branch</b> provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategic advice on matters relating to the delivery of policy advice on higher education infrastructure;</li> <li>• provides policy advice regarding philanthropy in an education environment; and</li> <li>• liaises with the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research on research matters as they impact higher education.</li> </ul> <p>The Branch administers the 2009 Higher Education Endowment Funding Round, the Capital Development Pool Program and the Better Universities Renewal Fund, and will deliver the Education Investment Fund.</p>	<p>Ph: 02 6219 3575 Email: <a href="mailto:julie.randall@deewr.gov.au">julie.randall@deewr.gov.au</a></p> <p>Postal address: Location 040 GPO Box 9880 CANBERRA ACT 2601</p>
<p><b>MR JASON COUTTS</b> Branch Manager Policy and Analysis Branch</p>	<p>The <b>Policy and Analysis Branch</b> is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• coordinating cross-group and cross-sectoral policy and parliamentary services;</li> <li>• development and implementation of mission-based compacts for universities (in cooperation with DIISR);</li> <li>• managing legislative services and the preparation of the Higher Education Annual Report;</li> <li>• the analysis and dissemination of higher education data;</li> <li>• research and analysis on higher education; and</li> <li>• the accountability framework for higher education (the Institutional Assessment Framework).</li> </ul>	<p>Ph: 02 6219 3569 Email: <a href="mailto:jason.coutts@deewr.gov.au">jason.coutts@deewr.gov.au</a></p> <p>Postal address: Location 032 GPO Box 9880 CANBERRA ACT 2601</p>
<p><b>MS CATHERINE VANDERMARK</b> Branch Manager Quality Branch</p>	<p>The <b>Quality Branch</b> develops policy in relation to higher education. In particular, it works to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote quality outcomes through the Australian Higher Education Quality Assurance Framework;</li> <li>• promote and support excellence in teaching and learning through funding the Australian Learning and Teaching Council and the Awards for Australian University Teaching;</li> <li>• strengthen the application of the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes; and</li> <li>• improve the recognition of qualifications and the transfer of credits for students moving between vocational education and training and higher education institutions.</li> </ul> <p>The Branch manages the development and implementation of the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund. It manages legislation, policy and communication in relation to private higher education providers. The Branch also provides Secretariat support to the Joint Committee on Higher Education, and policy input on higher education matters to bodies such as the Ministerial Council for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs; the Australian Qualifications Framework Advisory Board and the Australian Universities Quality Agency Board.</p>	<p>Ph: 02 6219 3555 Email: <a href="mailto:catherine.vandermark@deewr.gov.au">catherine.vandermark@deewr.gov.au</a></p> <p>Postal address: Location 022 GPO Box 9880 CANBERRA ACT 2601</p>
<p><b>MS ANNE BALY</b> Secretary Higher Education Review</p>	<p>The <b>Higher Education Review Secretariat</b> provides support to the Higher Education Review Expert Panel, which is undertaking a major Review of Australia's higher education system across 2008.</p>	<p>Ph: 02 6219 3566 Email: <a href="mailto:anne.baly@deewr.gov.au">anne.baly@deewr.gov.au</a></p> <p>Postal address: Location 031 GPO Box 9880 CANBERRA ACT 2601</p>