

IHEA Welcomes Announcement on Progressing Universities Accord Higher Education Review

Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA) welcomes the Government's announcement outlining the process for progressing the "Universities Accord" higher education review.

Tonight, Minister for Education Jason Clare provided details on the six-member panel and terms of reference to report on the Universities Accord between government, higher education providers, and other sectors and groups affected by higher education policy.

The Universities Accord panel will be chaired by Scientist Professor Mary O'Kane. Other panellists will be Academics Professor Barney Glover and Professor Larissa Behrendt, former Labor Minister Hon Jenny Macklin, former Hon Nationals Minister Fiona Nash, and Macquarie Group CEO Shemara Wikramanayake.

The key areas for review include 'Meeting Australia's knowledge and skills needs, now and in the future', 'Access and opportunity', 'Investment and affordability', 'Governance, accountability, and community', 'The connection between the vocational education and training and higher education systems', 'Quality and sustainability', 'Delivering new knowledge, innovation, and capability'.

An interim report will be prepared for mid-next year, with the final report due in December 2023.

"IHEA welcomes the announcement on the panel and progressing the new Universities Accord review of Australia's higher education system," said IHEA CEO, Dr Peter Hendy.

"Earlier this year, IHEA released an election platform calling for such a review to develop a national strategy for higher education structural reform to drive efficiencies, address economic demands, and realise the enormous scientific, societal, and commercial potential of the sector."

"IHEA seeks a combination of immediate and longer-term changes to higher education policy settings to address current needs and educate the workforce of the future. Sensible and equitable reforms will have immediate benefit to the Australian community and economy, whilst also energising the sector to deliver for future generations."

"The independent higher education sector is central to the success of Australian tertiary education. Independent higher education institutions deliver quality education and a student experience that leads the nation in student quality rankings. In government quality surveys, students consistently rank independent higher education institutions the highest in the country for teaching quality, learner engagement, skills development, and overall quality."

"Australia's diverse independent higher education sector comprises established and stable providers playing an important role in addressing skill needs and delivering quality education to students from a range of backgrounds."

"The Universities Accord is a great opportunity to harness the enormous capability of Australian independent higher education."

"IHEA looks forward to working closely with the government and the Universities Accord panel to review Australia's higher education system and examine themes for sector reform."

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