

SUBMISSION TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION STANDARDS PANEL

Consultation on the Transparency of Higher Education Admissions Processes

I make this submission to the consultation based on my recent experiences as higher degree by research student. In it, I make particular note to the enquiry's references to

- the Minister's concern about the capacity of some students to complete their courses, and
- the proportion of disadvantaged students gaining access to higher education has increased.

Based on my and others' experience as a HDR student enrolled with the Australian National University, I believe the Minister's concerns are warranted and that the increased participation rate of Aboriginal students is subject to support offered by the institution that is not only inadequate, it is dangerously misguided.

In describing my experience, my answers go to Question 1:

*What is the most important information needed to help potential higher education students determine which course to study and which institution to apply for?*

and Question 10

*What special measures are needed to ensure equity of access for disadvantaged students?*

I believe my enrolment at ANU was predicated on a positive discrimination basis. For me, that meant missing out on methodological training by being 'fast-tracked' by ANU which became an impediment to completion. However, I do not believe that my experience equals raising the drawbridge for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. I believe some of the measures and planned reforms in Appendix B may address this issue for future students. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students must be given the opportunity to rate institutions according to the support they have offered previous students.

The higher education framework must take seriously the challenges and conditions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people face in their daily lives to not only choose higher education, but also those that compete with the tasks necessary to meet their goal to complete.

The higher education framework must place clear responsibility on institutions to provide competent support and resources and that these be regularly reviewed in direct consultation with the student throughout the program.

Yours sincerely

Signed electronically

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