

# FYE Curriculum Design Forum 2009: Diversity Parallel Session

## Information Sheet

### Finding information on our students:

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) publish comprehensive statistical data on student profiles. The information can be accessed at:

[http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher\\_education/publications\\_resources/](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/)

You may need to search under Profiles.

### All Students 2007: Selected Data

DEEWR has a range of data available at:

[http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher\\_education/publications\\_resources/profiles/Students\\_2007\\_full\\_year\\_.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/profiles/Students_2007_full_year_.htm)

There is a separate spreadsheet for Indigenous students.

Appendices: Appendix 2 includes **equity data**.

There is comparative data by institution, generally from 2002 so that you can follow trends in retention and completion, for example.

### International Student Data

Detailed statistical data on international student enrolments is available on the Australian Education International (AEI) website.

Australian Education International (AEI) is the international arm of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

With around 370 000 students from 190 countries studying in Australia – and another 120 000 enrolments in Australian courses offshore – we have plenty to do to support the industry.

Available from:

<http://aei.gov.au/AEI/MIP/Statistics/StudentEnrolmentAndVisaStatistics/2008/Default.htm>

### Institutional Assessment Framework (IAF)

Available from:

<http://www.dest.gov.au/Search.htm?query=Institutional%20Assessment%20Framework>

All universities are required to report on Equity to DEEWR as part of their IAF report annually. These reports include data on performance but also on strategies and initiatives undertaken by universities to improve access and retention.

An Indigenous Educational Plan is part of the IAF reporting requirement.

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## **Possible future directions for equity and diversity:**

Bradley Review of Higher Education: Final Report

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Review/Pages/ReviewofAustralianHigherEducationReport.aspx>

Executive Summary (**extract**)

### *The way forward*

We must increase the proportion of the population which has attained a higher education qualification. To do this we need to reach agreement on where we need to be; provide sufficient funds to support the numbers we agree should be participating; ensure that the benefits of higher education are genuinely available to all; establish arrangements which will assure us that the education provided is of high quality; and be confident that the national governance structures we have in place will assist us to meet these goals.

Briefly, the panel recommends a package of reforms which if adopted will achieve the following outcomes:

#### **Targets**

- national targets for attainment of degree qualifications and for participation of low socio-economic status students will be set and institution-specific targets for participation and performance established and monitored;
- targets will be set to enable national benchmarking against other OECD countries to track system quality and performance;

#### **Students**

- all qualified students will receive an entitlement for a Commonwealth subsidised higher education place;
- students will have a choice of where to study at recognised institutions;
- funding will follow the student;
- institutions will have freedom to enrol as many students as they wish;
- funding for teaching will be increased;
- funding for low socio-economic status students will be significantly increased;
- funding for provision in regional and rural areas will be increased;
- levels of student financial support will be increased and eligibility made fairer based on need;

#### **Institutions**

- all higher education institutions, including universities, will be accredited;
- criteria for the title of university and for the right to offer research degrees will be tightened;
- a proportion of the funds allocated to institutions will be allocated on the basis of performance against specific targets for teaching and equity;
- funds for research will be increased to more fairly reflect costs;
- funds will be made available to assist institutions to make structural changes;

#### **The national framework**

- accountability will be simplified and streamlined to allow each institution to play to its strengths;
- the Australian Government will assume the primary funding and overall regulatory responsibility for tertiary education;
- the Australian Government will establish an independent national tertiary education regulatory body; and

- the Australian Government will progressively extend the tertiary entitlement to the
- vocational education and training (VET) sector commencing with higher level
- VET qualifications.

## Recommendations (selected –relating to equity and social inclusion)

### Recommendation 1

That the Australian Government adopt the vision, strategic goals and principles for the higher education system set out in this report. *(Chapter 1)*

### Recommendation 2

That the Australian Government set a national target of at least 40 per cent of 25- to 34-year-olds having attained a qualification at bachelor level or above by 2020. *(Chapter 3.1)*

### Recommendation 3

That the Australian Government commission work on the measurement of the socio-economic status of students in higher education with a view to moving from the current postcode methodology to one based on the individual circumstances of each student. *(Chapter 3.2)*

### Recommendation 4

That the Australian Government set a national target that, by 2020, 20 per cent of higher education enrolments at undergraduate level are people from low socio-economic status backgrounds. *(Chapter 3.2)*

### Recommendation 5

That the Australian Government introduce the following package of reforms to the student income support system. *(Chapter 3.3)*

Item	Nature of the reform
Parental Income Test threshold	Increase threshold for Parental Income Test to \$42,559, consistent with the value used for the Family Tax Benefit.
Parental Income Test indexation	Change the indexation rate to be consistent with the Family Tax Benefit index, a combination of CPI and Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE).
Parental Income Test taper rate	Change the taper rate for reduction in benefits for each child in the family on income support benefits to 20 per cent.  Apply the new taper rate only once as is the case for the Family Tax Benefit rather than for every child in the family receiving benefits.
Personal Income Test threshold	Increase the personal income threshold for Youth Allowance and Austudy to \$400 per fortnight.
Personal Income Test indexation	Change the indexation of the personal income threshold from zero to a wage basis (for example, Male Total Average Weekly Earnings).
Age of independence	Reduce the age of independence for Austudy from 25 to 22 years.
Change to eligibility conditions for independence	Remove the workforce participation criteria for independence of: (a) working part-time for at least 15 hours per week for at least 2 years; and (b) earning a specified amount in an 18-month period since leaving school.  Introduce 'grandfathering' arrangements for existing students who have already satisfied these criteria for independence.
Eligibility of masters coursework students	Extend eligibility for benefits to students enrolled in all masters by coursework programs.
Enhance the Commonwealth Scholarships program	Continue and enhance the Commonwealth Scholarships program by providing benefits to all eligible students on Austudy or Youth Allowance for education costs and accommodation costs (for those who need to leave home) and by transferring responsibility for the payment of benefits to Centrelink.

**Recommendation 6**

That the Australian Government undertake a regular process of triennial review of the income support system to assess the overall effectiveness of the support payments in reducing financial barriers to participation of students in need. *(Chapter 3.3)*

**Recommendation 30**

That the Australian Government regularly review the effectiveness of measures to improve higher education access and outcomes for Indigenous people in consultation with the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council. *(Chapter 4.2)*

**Recommendation 31**

That the Australian Government increase the funding for the access and participation of under-represented groups of students to a level equivalent to 4 per cent of the total grants for teaching. This would be allocated through a new program for outreach activities and a loading paid to institutions enrolling students from low socio-economic backgrounds. Funding for the Disability Support Program would be increased to \$20 million per year. *(Chapter 4.2)*

**Recommendation 32**

That the Australian Government quarantine 2.5 per cent of the total government funding for teaching and learning for each provider to be allocated on the basis of achievement against a set of institutional performance targets which would be negotiated annually. *(Chapter 4.2)*