



**AUSTRALIAN COMMITTEE OF CHAIRS OF ACADEMIC BOARDS AND
SENATES (OZCABS)**

**RESPONSE TO THE AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES ACCORD
DISCUSSION PAPER**

Each University has a Committee known as the Academic Board or Academic Senate, whose mandate is to contribute to academic governance to support the life of the university, in a tripartite relationship with University Council and University Executive. The Chairs of these Boards from across Australia meet biannually, to discuss current issues in higher education.

This submission represents the views of this national body (OzCABS), following upon meetings in 2022 and 2023. The Chairs would like to thank the Accord panel for allowing them to present this response.

The submission is restricted to Questions 36 and 37 from the Discussion Paper (section 3.6.2 - Regulation and Governance).

Q36: What regulatory and governance reforms would enable the higher education sector to better meet contemporary demands?

Consideration should be given to the following:

- Strengthening the tripartite governance model that reinforces the balance between Council, University Executive and Academic Board.
- Enhancing Council members' expertise to ensure a diverse range of expertise, including academic knowledge, on governance bodies. In many cases, the Chair of Academic Board's membership is important in Council's understanding of the broader operations of the university.
- Acknowledge the key role played by Academic Boards and Senates, as prescribed in almost all University Acts.
- Creating a principles-based 'code of good academic governance' guiding document to establish robust academic governance standards across universities.
- Preserving university autonomy and the fundamental concept of Academic Freedom.

Q37: How could a more coherent and dynamic national governance system for higher education be achieved?

Consideration should be given to the following:

- Promote a culture of self-regulation within higher education institutions, allowing for risk based, high-level, non-intrusive oversight by the regulatory body, in accordance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF).
- Adherence to the UNESCO Recommendation of principles of self-governance, collegiality, and academic leadership¹.
- Facilitate dialogue between institutions, government, and stakeholders for a coherent national governance system that promotes collaboration and communication.

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Chair, UTS Academic Board

Submitted on behalf of OzCABS

¹ [Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel | UNESCO](#)