



Student Representative Council **Western Sydney University**

SRC's Response to the Accord Interim Report

We, the Student Representative Council (SRC), would like to express our sincere appreciation for the release of the Australian Universities Accord Interim Report. The recommendations outlined in the report are both timely and forward-thinking, and we commend the five immediate actions proposed by the panel. These actions, especially the expansion of Regional University Centres and the removal of the Low Completion Rate rule, will undoubtedly increase access to higher education for students in regional and remote areas and promote student success and retention.

We are particularly thrilled to see the extension of a Commonwealth-supported place to all Indigenous Australians, regardless of their location. This step towards inclusivity aligns perfectly with our university's mission and values, as we strive to create a diverse and equitable learning environment.

Moreover, the call for funding certainty and support for students from equity groups underscores the Accord's commitment to providing opportunities for all students to succeed in their educational journeys.

The Interim Report's identification of areas for further consideration is equally commendable. We are pleased to see the focus on Indigenous voices, equity advancements, skills development, research support, and international engagement. These are critical aspects that will drive progress and excellence within the higher education sector.

While we appreciate the efforts to enhance access and equity for students, we wish to express our concern regarding the proposal for a levy on international student fees. We condemn the idea of imposing a levy on international student fees. It is essential to recognize that international students are an integral part of our academic community, and their contributions should be valued and supported rather than further burdened.

Similarly, SRC understands the need for priority areas, i.e., nursing and medicine, however, other disciplines should not be discriminated against through fee hikes. Universities should never be a place to simply improve employment opportunities. They are spaces to question, understand, and grow regardless of the discipline.

We hope that you consider our concerns and prioritize a comprehensive approach that upholds the principles of fairness and inclusivity in the higher education landscape.

At the July monthly meeting, the SRC collectively passed a motion after the release of the Interim report to express our appreciation for the meaningful suggestions and reforms that this report brings to the higher education sector. A copy of the motion is attached below. The Australian Universities Accord marks a significant milestone in the reform process and has the potential to shape the university landscape for generations to come.

We look forward to the positive impact these recommendations will have on the educational experience of students and the broader higher education community. Thank you once again for your commitment to improving and advancing the higher education sector.

Sincerely,

Vidushi Sethi
Vice President Education Undergraduate
Western Sydney University Student Representative Council

Motion 12.08: Welcoming of the Interim Report for the Australian Universities Accord

Issue	On the 19th of July at the National Press Club, the Hon. Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education released the interim report for the Australian Universities Accord.
Date	19 / 07 / 2023
Mover	Laine Fox
Seconder	Caitlin Marlor
Context	<p>Student Cohort Impacted - All Students</p> <p>The most recent Interim report of the Australian University Accords from the Federal Education minister was a sigh of relief from many students across Australia. The Interim report highlighted key issues facing students across University campuses, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A recommendation to provide financial support to students who participate in mandatory placements i.e., social work, Nursing, teaching and more. 2. Abolishment of the 50% pass rule for HECS Eligibility. 3. Ensuring Indigenous students are eligible for a funded place at university. 4. Creation of 20 additional regional university study hubs
Proposed Action/s	<p>I, Laine Fox move that the SRC:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Openly welcomes the Interim report delivered by the Federal Education Minister and encourages similar university reforms in the full report of the Universities Accord. 2. Encourages the Federal Minister for Education to go through with full Pay for mandatory Placements. 3. Promotes these wins for Australian University students on its social media platforms, including a statement Acknowledging and welcoming the outcome of the interim report and encouraging ongoing consultation with students across Australia. See Business paper F Motion 12.08: Folder of supporting visual designs