

MONDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2024

FEDERATION UNIVERSITY WELCOMES ACCORD FINAL REPORT

Federation University Australia welcomes the release of the Australian Universities Accord final report, in particular the proposed reforms on more equitable access to post-secondary education and greater alignment between vocational and higher education.

[The Australian Universities Accord final report](#) acknowledges the importance of regional universities, and the crucial role they play in improving the quality, accessibility, affordability and sustainability of higher education. As Victoria's leading regional university, advancement in these areas is central to Federation's mission to meet the education needs of the communities it serves.

The report cites the need for a seamless tertiary education system with stronger alignment between vocational and higher education to help meet Australia's future skills needs. The proposal for the creation of a Tertiary Education Commission to provide the leadership and stewardship necessary to transform the tertiary education system provides an opportunity to ensure a cohesive, whole-of-system view of the sector. As a dual-sector university, Federation is helping lead the way on establishing accessible pathways between TAFE and university.

Federation supports the call to ensure self-determination for First Nations peoples within a reformed and improved tertiary education system, embedding First Nations perspectives in the policymaking process and strengthening First Nations leadership and governance.

Federation also welcomes the recommendations that aim to improve education outcomes, safety and wellbeing for students. The acknowledgement of the need to pay students for mandatory placement work is a key element of Federation's Co-operative Education Model that aims to provide our students with paid industry placements, while the recommendation to establish a student ombudsman is strongly backed by the University.

The report also acknowledges that Australians from regional backgrounds have far lower educational attainment than those from the major cities, and that Australia will be unable to meet its skill needs without increasing attainment of historically under-represented cohorts in tertiary education. As the number one university in Australia for first-in-family enrolments since 2018, Federation is actively working to improve equitable access to post-secondary education.

Federation looks forward to actively engaging with the Federal Government on the implementation of the Accord Panel's report and will continue to advocate strongly for greater support of education in regional and peri-urban areas.

Quotes attributable to Federation University Australia Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Duncan Bentley

"Federation University Australia warmly welcomes the Australian Universities Accord final report, which highlights how important regional universities are in bridging the education gap facing students in regional and peri-urban areas to those in the major metropolitan centres."

"I would like to thank Professor Mary O'Kane and the Accord Panel for delivering this comprehensive long-term plan for Australia's tertiary education sector."

“Federation will continue to advocate strongly for regional education and research, and the critical contribution it makes to our communities.”

About Federation University Australia

With a history spanning over 150 years, Federation University Australia is Victoria’s premier regional dual-sector university with campuses located in Ballarat, Berwick, Gippsland and Wimmera. From 2018-2023 Federation ranked number one in Australia for first-generation student enrolments. In a first for Australia, the globally recognised co-operative education model will be embedded across all Federation programs from 2026.