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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Flush?? Really!!!

I am not particularly a politically aware person, but in looking back at a few of the columns I have written recently, it seems that there has been more of a political focus than I would have expected. Advance warning: I'm afraid that this column touches on politics as well.

It is hard to ignore the recent government budget announcements and their effects on both sides of the Tasman. Looking at it on the Australian side, the 2.5% efficiency dividend seemed to be justified (according to Julie Hare in the Australian) 'on the premise that they are flush with funds'. Really!! Not all Australian universities are 'flush', and in some cases those that might be flush, I would doubt the reason for that was strictly due to an 'abundance' of government funding. Besides, surpluses are necessary to plan for future activities, and as Lawrence Stedman of QUT said, they are also necessary 'purely to cover the risks...and one of the main risks is government policy'.

It also seems that the universities have been misled about increases in student fees offsetting the efficiency dividend—it appears that these are now going to be recouped by the government. So how are the universities that aren't flush with funds going to cope with all of these funding cuts? I understand the affect will be stronger in the regions than in any other areas.

And even those that are 'flush', I would expect there to be some belt tightening going on as well as potential scaling back of plans.

On this side of the Tasman we are also potentially affected by students who are no longer eligible for the Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS) in Australia—namely Australian Permanent Residents and New Zealanders studying in Australia. Our new Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gerry Brownlee, on his first visit overseas, raised the fact that New Zealanders who currently have access to the CGS will now no longer be eligible to receive that grant and will have to pay full fees. There is no such requirement on Australian citizens or Australian permanent residents who are studying in New Zealand (nor is there likely to be, as you just don't do that to mates). They are considered domestic students and pay domestic fees. I am not sure that Minister Brownlee expected that he would be 'heard' favourably, but he was 'disappointed' that there was no movement nonetheless. This could be a potential boon for New Zealand, and the wagons are already circling to see how many New Zealanders and Australian permanent residents might now come this way given that the fee differential (and potentially living costs) will be so much less this side of the Tasman. I would be surprised if there is a New Zealand university that isn't trying to calculate what kind of windfall might be coming their way.

Finally, 25 May is budget day here in New Zealand. Do I expect any surprises or major developments for the tertiary sector? Probably not. Tertiary education policy and budgets are generally not election winners over here, or losers for that matter. However, one can hope that there might be something that will make us smile. Is that a pipe dream?

So what are your thoughts about what is happening?



Kathie Rabel
AAIR President

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the May 2017 edition of *The Institutional Researcher*

Front and centre this month was the May 9 Australian Federal Budget. In terms of higher education, there was a lot of proposed changes to dissect and, as expected, mixed reactions. When you consider that Australia's higher education environment has been in a holding pattern policy-wise for some years now, the proposed reforms are not entirely unexpected. For Newsletter readers we have summarised the key proposals from the reform package and included some media commentary on page 8.

And as Kathy mentioned in her President's Update, the New Zealand Budget is due to be announced on 25 May 2017. It will be interesting to see how similar or dissimilar the two Budgets may be. Stay tuned for our update on the New Zealand Budget summary in the June Newsletter.

Here is a plug for our new 'Ask Anything' section (see page 12) where we post questions sent to us by our fellow institutional researchers / data specialists on an issue, dilemma, subject or request that they are working on and some pointers from the brain trust of the AAIR network is being sought. Help a colleague out if you can, and we will post the answers in the next issue. Because, you never know, someone out there just might be seeking the same answers!

Last but not least, Wayne Franklin from Charles Darwin University is in the Institutional Researcher's Corner this month with his answers to our five quick questions. We have no doubt you will find his responses interesting and very relatable!

Happy Reading!

Tracy and Monica

SECTOR NEWS AND VIEWS

Budget

As Australians prepared for the release of the annual federal budget on 9 May, universities pointed out that over the past six years they and their students have faced cuts that have contributed AU\$3.9 billion to help rein in the ever-increasing government deficit. A new analysis published by Universities Australia [shows that students and their institutions have contributed](#) nearly AU\$4 billion in net savings in government spending between 2011 and 2017 – all as a result of cuts to programs or changes to the way federal money is allocated.

See page 8 for a full summary of the 2017 Higher Education Reform Package and subsequent media coverage

Results from the Australian [Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching Student Experience Survey](#) (SES) were made available just prior to Easter. The [results](#) come from QILT'S 2016 survey and are based on a 46 per cent national response rate. Students also rate higher education providers on a range of attributes.

Also prior to Easter, a large delegation from Australia, including Education Minister Simon Birmingham, visited India in part to promote higher education collaboration. Minister Birmingham [stated](#) that his key objectives included developing opportunities for Australian providers to deliver quality higher education in India, emphasising Australia as an international education destination and making a commitment to [deepen collaboration and training opportunities](#).

[Universities Australia](#) has reacted to the abolition of Australia's 457 immigration visas and the effects on international staff. As well, the [Group of Eight](#) expressed their concerns adding, "This is particularly a concern at a time when there are opportunities for recruitment from the US and the UK and initiatives under way such as the recently announced Go8 – India taskforce tasked with developing PhD and researcher mobility between Australia and India".

The international March for Science was held on April 21 with active participation from the higher education sector in both

New Zealand (Wellington, Dunedin, Queenstown, Christchurch, Palmerston North and Auckland) and Australia (including Sydney, Melbourne, Hobart, Perth, Brisbane and Townsville). Simon Chapman's piece in [The Conversation](#) reminded us of the erosion of scientific research while [Peter Doherty summarised](#) the impact of reduced science funding in the US.

OnTask has gained some attention this month and it will be interesting to follow the outcomes of key pilot activities kicking off across four Australian institutions (UTS, UNSW, UniSA and USYD) this year. The key aims of this Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) commissioned project are to address the challenges faced by Australian Higher institutions to improve the quality of the student experience within the context of increasing enrolment numbers. [OnTask](#) is a software tool that gathers and assesses data about student's activities throughout the semester and allows instructors to design personalised feedback with suggestions about their learning strategies. [EdSurge](#) spoke with George Siemens about the tool's potential this month.

Academics working in the [UK and Australia experience more stress in their job](#) than their counterparts in Iran and Uganda, according to a study. The first global comparison of stress levels in different higher education sectors suggests that the world's happiest researchers are to be found in Germany, while scholars working in China feel the greatest strain.

UNESCO has released a higher education policy paper making six recommendations for policy-makers to address equality and affordability of access. The [policy paper](#) says the number of tertiary level students has doubled to 207 million between 2000 and 2014. But only 1% of the poorest quintile has spent more than four years in higher education, compared to 20% of the richest quintile.

From New Zealand, the report, [Moving Places: Destinations and earnings of international graduates](#), is the first to give comprehensive information about what international students do once they have completed their studies in New Zealand. Some 51% of international graduates remain in New Zealand five years after completing their qualification and some 39% remain after eight years, according to a Ministry of Education



report published earlier this year (see [Reports and Resources](#) for more details).

[New York approves tuition-free college for middle class](#) New York has become the first state in the US to make tuition free for middle-class students at both two and four-year public colleges. Undergraduate students who attend a State University of New York or City University of New York school will be eligible for the [Excelsior Scholarship](#) if their families earn no more than US\$100,000 a year. The income cap will lift to US\$110,000 next year and will reach US\$125,000 in 2019.

A poll conducted by ComRes for Universities UK revealed that most members of the British public [do not view international students as immigrants to the UK](#). The result showed that only 26% of the British public think of international students as immigrants when thinking about government immigration policy. Recently-published [figures](#) on the economic impact of international students in the UK showed that they now generate more than £25 billion (US\$31 billion) for the economy and their spending supported 206,600 jobs in university towns and cities across the UK.

The new [Asian Universities Alliance or AUA](#), initiated and chaired by Tsinghua University in Beijing, was launched on 29 April with some 15 universities from 14 countries taking part. Some 400 university presidents, professors and students attended the summit, according to Tsinghua University.

Of interest, Futao Huang in [University World News](#) examines higher education in Asia and interprets quality assurance and quality improvement as it relates to the experiences of Asian universities and regulatory bodies basing their frameworks on western systems.

Rankings

The Spanish Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas's [Ranking Web of Universities](#) has released a new list of the world's most highly cited scholars. Funded by the European Commission, the CSIC ranks 1612 researchers with an H-index (published papers and times cited in other papers) higher than 100. They are identified "according to their declared presence" in the Google Scholar Citations database.

New Zealand universities have [dropped to 15th place in the latest Universitas 21 rankings list](#), from ninth place in the first list in 2013 to 14th last year and now 15th. According to a [report](#) written by a group at the University of Melbourne, the decline was mainly due to falling behind other countries in the numbers of researchers per million people and in the proportion of people aged 25 to 64 with tertiary qualifications.

Campus news

[Western Sydney University](#) has opened a 14 level \$220m vertical campus in the Parramatta CBD. Teaching 10 000 students in business and other disciplines, the building is named for WSU Chancellor Peter Shergold. Curtin University Council has approved the [university's campus in Dubai](#) teaching IT, business and arts. This will be Curtin's third international campus, following Sarawak and Singapore. A new PVC will run the campus, over-seeing academic staffing, course material and teaching standards, plus enrolments, assessment and exams

Reported in [Campus Morning Mail](#) (April 26) Deakin University offers a [Getting Started Survey](#) for new students who are asked to review their initial experiences. Accordingly, the University is responding to student feedback.

The University of South Australia and defence systems maker Saab will set up a [joint centre for defence technologies](#). Defence Industry Minister Christopher Pyne says Saab Australia will invest \$40 million in the purpose-built centre at its Mawson Lakes headquarters.

As reported previously, Victoria University is set to introduce a new [First-Year Model](#) which will involve a significant expansion of staff dedicated to the first year experience and will be on a scale that has yet to be implemented in other Australian institutions. Victoria University VC Peter Dawkins and PVC Ian Solomonides article in [The Australian](#) post-budget reiterated the importance of positive engagement strategies and student satisfaction with their university experience – hence the move to a first-year model – in these challenging times for higher education.

The University of the Sunshine Coast will receive a \$100m loan to build a [new campus](#) in south-east Queensland. USC VC Professor Greg Hill discussed the new

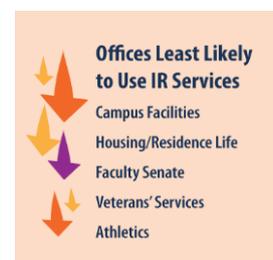
plans for the campus in a [podcast](#) in [Campus Review](#) (May 15)

BIG DATA, ONLINE LEARNING, ANALYTICS & TECHNOLOGY

April's [eAIR](#) reported the release of 14 case studies highlighting the use of student-level postsecondary data on US campuses.

One of the case studies from Georgia State University, reported in the [Times Higher Education](#), outlines the institution's use of data analytics technologies since 2011 and their attempts to improve graduation rates. Georgia State is one of 11 institutions in the US pioneering the use of big data to boost student success rates as part of the [University Innovation Alliance](#): a coalition of US public research universities formed in 2014 to address the need for more college-educated citizens in the US workforce. A comprehensive overview of all 14 case studies can be found [here](#).

Also in eAIR, Data Bite features another snapshot from the US [National Survey of IR Offices](#). This month the survey summarised the most and least likely units to use Institutional Research services (reflected below):



[Where every tertiary student is a potential data point](#) The importance of institutional research is discussed via the example from [Western Governors University or WGU](#), a non-profit, online institution based in Salt Lake City. WGU institutional-research office has doubled



in size, thanks to the addition of several business-intelligence analysts.

[Colleges and universities tap mobile to get real-time feedback on students' campus experience.](#) A fast growing mobile app known as [OOHLALA](#) has added a survey tool designed to surface real-time feedback on student experiences and engagement.

[How do universities use big data?](#) From personalising tuition to performance management, the use of data is increasingly driving how institutions operate.

Reported in [eCampus News](#), Tableau, a provider of visual analytics, announced the availability of a new Tableau for Teaching curriculum, Introduction to Data Journalism. The course focuses on the importance of data literacy in media and is available to instructors for free through the Tableau for Teaching program.

Still trying to get your head around 'Blockchain'? A recent article from EDUCAUSE [The Blockchain Revolution and Higher Education](#) provides a concise overview and aligns this emerging technology to higher education.

Speaking of which – [University of Melbourne first in Australia to use blockchain for student records.](#) The University will soon test blockchain technology to record student credentials, allowing people to share verified copies of their qualifications with employers and other third parties in a tamper-proof system.

James Milligan from Hays has offered [Eight emerging technology jobs that are going to explode this year](#), noting the rise of data scientists and data analysts.

A new report in the US [Artificial Intelligence Market in the US Education Sector 2017-2021](#) predicts artificial intelligence (AI) in the education sector will grow around 48% through 2021. Summarised in [eCampus News](#), the report notes that the growth of AI will require new institutional policies and guidelines.

[Students to colleges: Please use our data this way.](#) In the US, an [Ellucian survey](#), reveals that students expect institutions to use their personal data to deliver an enhanced learning experiences.

GRADUATE OUTCOMES AND EMPLOYABILITY

The Future of Work



Watch this short [video](#) of today's business leaders discussing the future of work, exploring the key themes raised by the Chartered Accountants ANZ/Deloitte "The Future of Work" White Paper.

PhDs

Some discussion this month on the outcomes of PhD students both nationally and internationally. Richard Russell, a former PVC for research operations at the University of Adelaide, told the Third International Conference on Developments in Doctoral Education and Training that in an attempt to track the performance of those who supervise doctoral students Australia's Group of Eight agreed to require the formal training and registration of doctoral supervisors as long ago as 2004-05. All supervisors were therefore assessed on their number of past students, current "load" and an index designed to capture "outcomes versus opportunities." [The university was keen to reward supervisors for "timely" completions, other completions and "student rescues,"](#) when someone about to abandon a thesis was persuaded to stay on.

Universities have been urged to do more to tackle a mental health crisis among postgraduates as new figures show that more than half of PhD students experience symptoms of psychological distress and one in three is at risk of having or developing a psychiatric disorder. A recent [research paper](#) compared PhD candidates with other groups in universities and wider society. It found that PhD students were 2.8 times more likely to develop mental health problems than university employees that hold a higher education qualification and 2.4 times more likely than degree-holders in the general population. These results compare with surveys and research reported in *THE* and *Inside Higher Ed* in both the [UK](#) and the [US](#) in recent times.

Micro-credentialing

[How 6 thriving institutions are leveraging alternative credentials for student success](#) As higher education evolves, so, too do the paths to degrees. And attaining a degree often involves alternative credentials including MOOCs, micro-credentialing or badges, or non-credit certificate programs. The findings of a study "[Alternative Credentials in Higher Education: PLA 2.0](#) offers insights into how alternative credentials are defined and used at adult learning institutions.

In the [Hechinger Report](#), an article on the inevitability of online learning and stackable credentials as part of the higher education experience.

From *The Conversation*, [Degrees of separation: companies shed degree requirements to promote merit over qualifications.](#) Joshua Krook discusses the increasing number of larger organisations abandoning degree requirements. Companies like Ernst & Young, PwC, Ogilvy, Google and Apple are relaxing or abandoning degree requirements hiring people based on merit and using other forms of psychometric testing.

Another example related to this is Minerva, an accredited four-year university and all of Minerva's classes take place online. The interactive platform is designed to keep student engaged and allow professors to call on them. Minerva students start school in San Francisco and then spend time in Berlin, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Taipei, Taiwan, and other global hubs, continuing to take online classes and completing hands-on assignments at local companies and organisations. [The future of universities may very well be that students study online with no exams required.](#)

News this month that [DeakinPrime](#) and [DeakinDigital](#) are merging to become [DeakinCo](#). The university-backed entity will be led by Simon Hann who will oversee the integration of the two and provide "holistic end-to-end offering that meet the learning and development needs of workplaces today and in the future".

[My eQuals](#) was officially launched April 26 (as reported in the April Newsletter). The platform enables Australian and New Zealand students and graduates to access digital versions of transcripts and academic documents and share them



with employers, universities or other parties.

Future Jobs

The US-based Pew Research Centre has released [The Future of Jobs and Jobs Training](#) which reports on the findings of survey of 1,408 technologists, scholars, practitioners, strategic thinkers and education leaders in mid-2016. The key questions centered around the future of workplace training.

PwC will launch their ["Higher Apprenticeship" pilot program](#) next month, targeting approximately 250 school-leavers. The Program will run for 18 months and allow school-leavers to get a business diploma while they work alongside graduate employees in core company areas. At least five other companies are expected to participate.

[Will the robot war on jobs change higher education?](#) Edited interview with Andrew McFee, research scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, on the role of higher education in the automation and AI discussion.

And while we are on the topic, here are some of the [highest paying jobs you don't need a degree for](#): Construction Manager (av. Salary \$153,213); Maintenance Manager (av. Salary \$110,030); and Farm Manager (av. Salary \$92,588).

LEARNING & TEACHING

Preliminary data has been released from an Australian OLT project [Contract Cheating and Assessment Design: Exploring the Connection](#) which has indicated at least 6% of students are engaging in some type of cheating. University of South Australia project researchers Tracey Bretag and Rowena Harper also noted that [68% of academic staff surveyed had come across instances of suspected contract cheating among students](#). The study involved 15,000 students and 1,200 staff from eight universities and four pathway colleges.

[Universities set new bar for teaching: HEA head](#). A growing number of Australian universities are signing on to an international benchmark of teaching and learning practice, as institutions tackle long-held concerns about the status of teaching in the sector. Four Australian universities (QUT, ANU, Murdoch and UTas) have so far been accredited with the British-based Higher Education

Academy and a further 12 are in discussions with the Academy. In NZ, AUT and Massey have also signed up to the scheme.

The growth in open educational resources (OER) in higher education continues with two US examples highlighted this month: More than \$8 million (US) has been spent on the new [Excelsior Scholarship](#) program in New York (reported in the April Newsletter) and; The Houston Community College (HCC) has partnered with the Kinder Foundation to develop a [Z-degree program](#). HCC Z-degrees will cover costs throughout students' two-year associate's degree in business administration and general studies, and students participating in the program will use free open educational resources (OER).

RESEARCH

The Australian Research Council's (ARC) engagement and Impact Assessment pilot is now underway. Ten discipline areas are being looked at as part of the pilot. But when the full scheme is launched in 2018, all disciplines at all Australian universities will be measured, not only for research performance but also for how well connected their research is to community and stakeholders. ARC Research Fellow Ian Moffet detailed his own research experience engaging with the community and valuable lessons learned in [The Conversation](#) (May 9)

[Universities may be made to hire more women researchers](#). Reported in the Canadian Press, Canada's science minister says universities are not doing the heavy lifting to appoint more female research chairs, so she wants to force their hands.

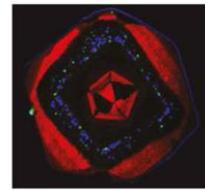
The Australian Research Council [announced \\$3.7 million](#) to support new research projects funded under the ARC Linkage Projects scheme in early May. Ten new Linkage projects were announced – four for the University of Queensland.

And from the *Campus Morning Mail* (May 10, 2017) The University of South Australia is extending opportunities for its researchers with VC David Lloyd announcing two programs: Mining company [Santos is gifting \\$2m](#) to fund five-year research fellowships for two

researchers at UniSA's Future Industries Institute, a partnership with University College London. [Three UniSA researchers](#) with expertise in Indigenous knowledges, the identity and contribution of First Peoples in Australia and related subjects will also work at the King's College London Menzies Centre for Australian Studies.

(MORE) REPORTS AND RESOURCES

[2016 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap](#)



Source: Department of Education and Training. Chief Scientist Dr Alan Finkel

The National Research Infrastructure Roadmap sets out Australia's national research infrastructure priority areas for the coming decade. These priorities will support areas of research, science and innovation in areas where Australia excels.

For the tertiary sector: Attending to the skill level of researchers: Current deficit in data analysis, AI, machine learning, software development. Roadmap proposes (a) innovative approaches to career progression and skills recognition in academia; (b) closer engagement between academia and industry, inclusive of secondments and scholarships for PhD students; (c) ensuring research infrastructure programs include operational funding for skilled personnel.

Note: The Roadmap is almost identical to the *draft* released late 2016, calling for prioritisation of nine focus areas (including digital data and eResearch platforms). Government feedback is expected in the coming months.

[Student equity and employability in higher education](#)

Source: Centre for Higher Education and Diversity Research, La Trobe University

The La Trobe team conducted research that included an analysis of employability



policy in higher education across the UK, US and Australia; a desktop analysis of Australian university websites; and a survey of both career managers and student union leaders within Australian public universities. The approach enabled both managerial and student views to be captured.

While focused on Australia, the comparative contextual analysis enabled a broader understanding of important similarities and differences across Anglo-American contexts.

[Moving places. Destinations and earnings of international graduates](#)

Source: Ministry of Education, New Zealand

The report is the first to give comprehensive information about what international students do once they have completed their studies in New Zealand. International education is now New Zealand's fifth-largest export sector, with the value of the industry estimated at NZ\$2.85 billion (US\$2 billion) in 2014. This includes earnings from tuition fees and living costs, and the value of the jobs created.

[Under the radar: The mental health of Australian university students](#)



Source: Orygen, the National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health

Of Australia's 1.4 million university students approximately three in five are aged between 15 and 24 years and at least one in four of these young people will experience mental ill-health in any one year

University students' mental health needs are "surprisingly neglected", even though most are in the age range where serious problems are prone to emerge. The report calls for universities to embrace mental health as "core business" by boosting funding for campus health services and working with external health organisations.

[Innovation and Science Australia 2030 Strategic Plan \(Issues Paper\)](#)

Source: Australian Government. Office of Innovation and Science. Open for submission (closing May 31, 2017)

This **Issues Paper** considers the completed review of the innovation, science and research system (<https://industry.gov.au/Innovation-and-Science-Australia/Documents/ISA-system-review/index.html>) and presents six key challenges calling on stakeholders (such as business, investors, researchers and government) to assist in the development of a long-term national strategy around innovation and science.

[Statistics Report on TEQSA Registered Higher Education Providers – May 2017](#)



Source: Australian Government, Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

The **Statistics Report** provides a snapshot of national statistics from across the sector, bringing together data collected directly by TEQSA and data sourced from the main higher education statistics collections managed by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

For the first time, TEQSA has been able to provide a three-year comparison of provider, student, staff and financial data. TEQSA has used the broad categories 'Universities', 'Non-University For-Profit' (For-Profit), 'Non-University Not-for Profit' (Not-for-Profit) and 'Technical and Further Education' (TAFE)

Note: Unlike the department's statistical collections, which focus mainly on universities, it allows comparisons across the sector.

More ...

Not really a report, but, in light of the recent Budget announcement and the changes to the higher education sector, the proposed Higher Education Reforms (already been through first and second readings in the House of Representatives) may be of interest to members: [Higher Education Support Legislation Amendment \(A More Sustainable, Responsive and Transparent Higher Education System\) Bill 2017](#)

*Please note that the Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee is accepting submissions until **8 June 2017** for those interested in providing a submission to the inquiry. The report will be published on 9 August 2017.*



NEWSLETTER EDITORS' SPECIAL SUMMARY:

2017 HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM PACKAGE

In May 2016, as part of the 2016–17 Budget, the Australian Government released a policy options paper, [Driving Innovation, Fairness and Excellence in Australian Higher Education](#), which outlined options for reform. In total, 1218 submissions in response to the paper were received comprising contributions from higher education institutions, peak bodies, representative bodies from industry and professions, unions and individuals. These submissions then informed discussions with an expert advisory panel, appointed in October 2016. This **reform package** is the product of these consultations.

According to the package, the measures outlined in this package provide a total saving of **\$2.8 billion** in underlying cash terms over 2017–18 to 2020–21

[Higher Education Reform Package – May 2017](#)

Reform proposals:

- Students' share of the cost of their degree to increase from an average 42% to 46%, with taxpayers paying the balance (government load drops from 58% to 54%).
- Maximum student contribution increases to be phased in by 1.8% each year from 2018-2021 (1.8% in each year culminating to a 7.5% increase by 2021/on average \$2000-\$3600 increase in fees for a four year course)
- Starting repayment threshold for loans lowered from \$55,000 to \$42,000 with a 1% repayment rate and a maximum threshold of \$119,882 with a repayment rate of 10%. This new schedule will align to CPI (currently it aligns to Average Weekly Earnings (AWE).
- A 2.5% efficiency dividend in 2018 and 2019 to be extended to universities
- HEPPP funding has been retained with legislation providing ongoing support for access and equity in HE (An *Access and Participation Fund* and a *National Priorities Pool*).
- From 2018 subsidies for most Australian permanent residents and NZ citizens enrolling in a Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP) will be withdrawn making them fee-paying students.
- The Promotion of Excellence in Learning and Teaching in higher Education (PELTHE) program will cease and administration of the AAUT and the OLT digital repository (of project outcomes) will be transferred to Universities Australia.
- \$15 million over four years will be spent to establish and maintain up to eight community-owned, regional study hubs (Students can study courses locally delivered by distance from Australian universities).
- In 2019 the government will implement a 'student-centred' model for the distribution of postgraduate coursework places.
- From 2018 the demand-driven funding system will be expanded to include CSP in approved sub-bachelor level diploma, advanced diploma and associate degree courses.
- From 2019 a new distribution mechanism for enabling courses will be implemented to better match places to student need.
- From 2018 Commonwealth contributions will be provided for Work Experience in Industry (WEI) units where the qualification is up to one-sixth of the student's total load (these units are currently ineligible for CGS funding).
- From 2018 7.5% of a university's CGS cluster funding will be contingent on performance requirements (including admissions information transparency for students and regular reporting on costs of teaching and research by field of education – ultimately, publication of financial data on the QILT website).
- The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) will be provided \$3.3 million over four years to work with key stakeholders in Australia's higher education sector to deliver a joint plan to implement the Panel's key recommendations ([HESP Report](#))
- Establishment of a more transparent framework for the collection of financial data from higher education providers in order to regularly report on the cost of teaching and research by field of education.
- The Government will undertake a review of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) commencing in the second half of

2017, to be completed by 31 December 2018.

- The Higher Education Standards Panel (HESP) will oversee a review of the Criteria for Higher Education Providers commencing in the second half of 2017 to be completed during the first half of 2018

What's already underway:

- ⊕ Recommendations from the Higher Education Standards Panel (HESP) report, [Improving the Transparency of Higher Education Admissions](#) have been accepted and implementation begins early in mid-2017. HESP will also identify trends and factors driving completions and attrition.
- ⊕ Investment in QILT (\$35.5 million 2016-2020). This includes \$8.1 million for measures to improve greater transparency for students, including data on real graduate earnings and the likelihood of students completing their course.
- ⊕ In 2017, the Department of Education and Training is working with the Australian Tax Office (ATO) to develop graduate income data to inform students of earnings potential. Data is scheduled to be published on the QILT website in early 2018.

Media Comments:

Sector and media reaction to the new reform package was extensive. While the initial release had a cautious reaction (almost moderate and fair), post-budget reflection started to scrutinise the longer term impact for students and institutions. We've attempted to bring together an overview of this coverage that reflects the key responses from the sector:

On ABC's Radio National, Fran Kelly interviewed Monash VC [Margaret Gardner](#) who highlighted the key proposals in the package. Margaret's piece in [The Conversation](#) on Budget Day detailed the effect on university performance funding.

The [Group of Eight's](#) response to the announcement took affront at the government's perceived attitude to higher education claiming,

We are still being treated like a drain on the Budget ... We in fact contribute some \$22 billion each year as the nation's third largest service sector export. It is disappointing that our value



to Australia ... can be so conveniently ignored.

Chair of Go8 [Professor Peter Hoj](#) later claimed that institutions may need to increase numbers of full fee paying international students (ahead of domestic enrolments) to accommodate the budget cut.

Universities Australia also [queried the government interpretation of the data](#) (from [Deloitte Access Economics](#)) used by the government comparing teaching costs and funding but generally were [receptive](#) to several of the proposals including maintaining HEPPP funding and the new payments for work integrated learning (WIL) placements.

The [Innovative Research Universities](#) (IRU) group criticised the government for using the Deloitte report on university financial performance to claim the system can absorb the proposed cuts. The [Regional Universities Network](#) welcomed the HEPPP continuation and the extension of the sub-bachelor places.

The [Australian Technology Network](#) of Universities (ATN) took a little time to respond to the reform package but were generally favorable noting the alignment to education outcomes in line with the National Innovation and Science Agenda

Emmaline Bexley's piece in [The Conversation](#) highlighted the long term impact on students in terms of financial stress as well, but like UA and IRU, queried the government interpretation of the financial data from Deloitte. Ittima [Cherastidham](#) from the Grattan Institute provided a [concise breakdown of actual costs](#) incurred by students and the University of Canberra's [National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling](#) (NATSEM) offered up some cost models as well.

The [NTEU National President Jeannie Rea](#) expressed disappointment in the reform package claiming the funding squeeze could lead to higher student to staff ratios and a greater reliance on casual teaching staff. On budget day their mood had darkened and they had added that the government intentions were to "[swindle students](#)" with higher fees and teaching cuts.

The [Australian Higher Education Industrial Association](#) (AHEIA) then called on the NTEU to pull back on their calls for wage increases in light of the reform proposals.

The Council of Private Higher Education and the Australian Council for Private Education and Training provided a [joint response](#) to the reform package noting that the inequality of private college students accessing FEE-HELP has not been addressed.

[Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia](#) (EPHEA) emphasised the additional burden on students from low socioeconomic status (low SES) and the additional pressures they may face. Like many of the reactions there was concern that the government may have overlooked the substantial economic and social benefits by improved educational and employment outcomes for students.

There was also [substantial criticism](#) from New Zealand ministers concerned with the decision to charge permanent residents and NZ nationals full fees – particularly those students studying in [Queensland](#)

The [Universitas 21 Ranking](#) (which currently puts Australia as 10th best in the world in terms of its higher education system) also [raised concerns](#) that the funding cuts could have implications for future rankings.

Post-budget saw the release of budgetary changes to vocational education and the 'Skilling Australians Fund' with the explicit purpose of [supporting apprenticeships and traineeships](#).

[Concerns](#) raised by Julie Hare, from? *The Australian*, that budget cuts would be of detriment to? any institutional surpluses, but have even more? dire consequences for those universities currently in a deficit.

The Labor Party [announced](#) their opposition to all funding cuts adding they would isolate at least two-thirds of public skills funding for TAFE, and commit \$100 million to a "Building TAFE for the Future Fund".

Labour would also reverse federal skills funding "cuts" and launch three new initiatives to boost apprenticeships, as well as maintaining the \$1.5 billion in funding promised through the government's Skilling Australians Fund.

Infographics

- ✗ A couple of infographics post-budget (for those of us looking for big picture overviews): [The Conversation](#) wasn't really trying

with too much detail and too few graphics ... (and we've reported them to Kathie Rabel's Pet Peeves)

Housing affordability measures

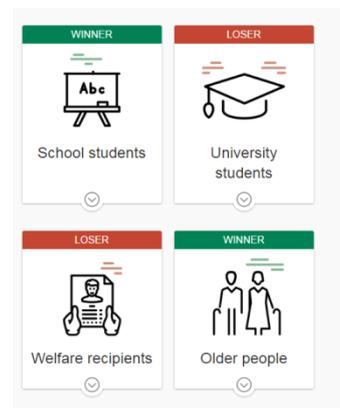
Immediate restrictions on foreign owners and investors

- Vacant property penalty will apply to foreign-owned properties vacant for more than six months of the year, resulting in \$16.5 million in savings through to 2020-21
- Capital gains tax will be denied to foreign and temporary tax residents for properties bought after budget night, with existing properties grandfathered until 2018-20, with an expected saving of \$281 million in the next four years
- A 50% cap on foreign ownership of new developments, at no forecast cost or revenue

Education

- Tertiary education cuts - saving up to \$2.8 billion over four years
- HECS-HELP repayments threshold to cut-in from \$42,000 per annum (at 1% from 1 July 2017) down from the previous threshold of \$54,900
- A 2.5% efficiency dividend cut applied to commonwealth supported places
- University fees will increase 7.5% by 2021

- ✓ [ABC News Online](#) did a little better with their 'winners' and 'losers' representation, also colour-coded for good measure with handy drop-down explanations. Also, check out their colour bar interactive graphics for [Where every dollar comes from, and how it's spent](#) – Education is orange



Surveys and data

[Universities Australia](#) also claimed that most Australian voters disapprove of federal Budget proposals for higher education cuts and referred to the [Essential Report](#) poll (which undertook surveys regarding [university funding](#), [education cuts](#) and [student contributions to university fees](#) after the release of the reform package).

And finally ... Nick Carter's column in *The Australian* (May 16) [Millennials ask: can we have some more?](#)

The changes to HECS arrangements are a necessary adjustment and hardly draconian. Yet they are an uncomfortable reminder to young graduates of a financial investment in higher education that may not be delivering the yields they expect.



ON THE MOVE

Margaret Gardner officially commenced her new role as Chair of Universities Australia on May 16

Professor **Sue Thomas** is the new CEO of the Australian Research Council from July. She will move from the University of New England, where she was appointed provost and DVC in April 2015.

QUT Vice Chancellor **Peter Coaldrake** is retiring at the end of 2017. A replacement is being sought and will be announced later in the year.

Dawn Freshwater was installed as the University of Western Australia's 18th Vice Chancellor on April 26.

Helen Bartlett took over as Vice Chancellor of Federation University on May 4.

UNSW announced **Laurie Pearcey** as PVC International. He replaces Fiona Docherty who is now in the international and marketing communications portfolio.

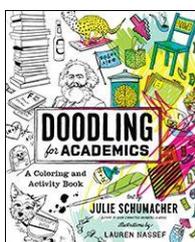
TEQSA appointments: **Dorothy Iling** becomes assistant director, engagement. **Raphael May** becomes assistant communications director. **Poppy Bervanakis** is events and marketing manager and **Felicity Gianatti** will now manage contact with professional bodies.

At Flinders University **Deborah West** joins as PVC for Learning and Teaching Innovation (from Charles Darwin University) and **Michele Fleming** becomes PVC for Student Life (from University of Canberra)

Conrad Mackenzie has resigned as Chief Digital Officer at UNSW.

Theo Farrell is the incoming Dean of Law, Humanities and the Arts at the University of Wollongong.

BOOK REVIEWS



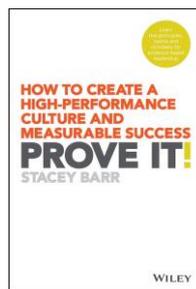
Doodling for Academics

Julie Schumacher (with Illustrations by Lauren Nassef)

(Yes, we know it's just a colouring and activity book...)

"No one understands this world better than novelist Julie Schumacher, who here provides a bitingly funny distraction designed to help you survive life in higher education without losing your mind."

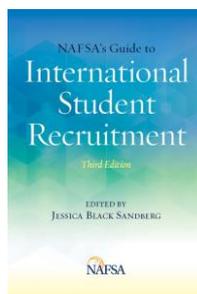
Inside Higher Ed [interviewed the author](#) this month.



[Prove It! How to Create a High-Performance Culture and Measurable Success](#) (**Recommended by AAIR President Kathie Rabel)

Stacey Barr

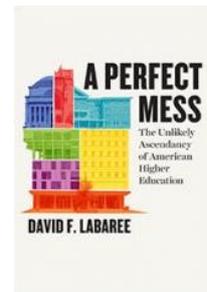
According to the author, the book provides a clear blueprint for building on your existing skills and performance management systems to build a truly high performance organisation. This blueprint offers three personal leadership habits and three organisation-wide habits claiming to transform your organisation into the "powerhouse you know it can be"



[NAFSA's Guide to International Student Recruitment](#)

Jessica Black Sandberg

NAFSA released the third edition of the [Guide to International Student Recruitment](#). This edition compiles the latest tools, resources, and strategies from the professionals in the field of international enrollment management.



[A Perfect Mess: The Unlikely Ascendancy of American Higher Education](#)

David F. Labaree

The Australian and American university systems are becoming increasingly more similar – rising student debt, affirmative action debates, and conflicts between faculty and administrators. Read *A Perfect Mess* to explore the issues in today's higher education in United States and perhaps comparisons or lessons can be drawn from looking at experiences of our North American counterparts.

POSITIONS VACANT

Seeking another opportunity in Institutional Research in Australia? Try our [Higher Education Jobs](#) webpage for current vacancies in the profession. If you are seeking an international career change see our American colleagues [AIR Careers](#) page.

Editor's note: There are plenty of vacancies at the moment – please explore these at www.aair.org.au/pages/higher-education-jobs.

LOOKING FOR SOME TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT?

See our [Training and Development](#) webpage focused on training for institutional researchers.

LOOKING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCES AND EVENTS?

Here is a selection of upcoming events (or past events) that may be of interest. See our [Events/Fora](#) webpage for more national and international events.

[EduTECH International Congress & Expo](#)

8-9 June 2017, Sydney, Australia

EduTECH is the LARGEST education event in Asia-Pac and the Southern Hemisphere consisting of one large exhibition with eight parallel conferences, and eight pre-event masterclasses.

AAIR members might consider the Tertiary Education IT Leaders stream of the event

<http://www.edutech.net.au/tertiary.html>

[STARS Conference](#) (registration open)



2-5 July, Adelaide, Australia

This conference provides the opportunity to disseminate and discuss current research, good practice, emerging initiatives and leading edge ideas that are aimed at enhancing students' tertiary learning experiences.

[26th National VET Research Conference](#)



5 to 7 July, Hobart

Register now for the [26th National Vocational Education and Training Research Conference 'No Frills'](#), to be held at TasTAFE Drysdale Campus in Hobart, Tasmania.

Join the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) for an exciting program, featuring over 50 presentations and poster sessions addressing the theme *Skilling for tomorrow*.

[Digital Campus and Blended Learning Innovation: The New Era of Teaching and Learning](#)



18-20th of July, Melbourne, Australia

The conference will bring forward case studies from institutions across Australia and abroad, allowing you to gain insights into best practices and bench mark your institution's progress against industry leaders.

[Bluenotes Americas 2017](#)

1-4 August, 2017 The Brown Hotel
Louisville, KY United States

This year's *Bluenotes Americas Conference* theme is 'Higher Education in the 21st Century: Using Data to Respond to Opportunities and Challenges'. A three-day conference to connect, share expertise, and learn from best practices.



29-31 August 2017, Intercontinental,
Sydney

The Higher Education Summit will see Vice-Chancellors from across Australia discussing the critical forces that are shaping the future of the sector.

[EAIR 2017](#)

3-6 September, 2017

EAIR is the European Association for Institutional Research (International association for higher education researchers, practitioners, managers and policy-makers). There will be eight major tracks: governance and management, teaching and learning, quality management, strategy and strategising, professionals, performance and assessment, funding and regional innovation.

[SEAAIR 2017 Annual Conference](#)

6-8 September 2017

Theme: ASEAN Higher Education at the Crossroad: Challenges, Changes, Capacities, and Capabilities

From networking with peers to presentation sessions by leading experts

in the field, the annual conference is the must attend event for academics, educators, researchers and practitioners in higher education

[Tertiary Education Management Conference 2017](#)

17-20 September 2017, Crown
Convention Centre, Melbourne



The TEMC this year will be exploring the theme *Eureka*. The conference will be revolutionary in exploring ideas that encourage and create fabulous discussion, innovation, awesome networking and important information sharing.

[Service Improvement and Innovation in Universities](#)

19-20 October 2017, Pier One, Sydney
Harbour

This year's conference will sharpen the focus on innovation; what innovation is in tertiary education and skills for creating innovation.

[28th ISANA International Education Association & 22nd Australia and New Zealand Student Services Association Conferences](#)



5-8 December 2017, STAR, Gold Coast,
Australia

The theme for the conference is *Widening Perspectives of Student Success*.

The conference will give us the opportunity to explore and discuss the many factors that contribute to the overall student success, both within and outside the classroom. There will be an exciting program of speakers, workshops, social activities and lots of networking opportunities. Delegates will be able to share successful strategies, engage with key stakeholders and develop important partnerships.



INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER'S CORNER

Five questions with Wayne Franklin, Charles Darwin University



What is your job title?

Student Experience and Evaluation Officer

Briefly, how would you describe your role in terms of your place in your institution?

As the importance of data continues to grow I believe roles such as mine and our Survey team are quite vital to the institution. Being able to collect, collate and analyse large amounts of data for the purposes of improving quality, the educational outcomes of students and using it to inform the decision making process is an important function for any organisation.

I oversee a wide variety of survey activities from organising data for the national Higher Education surveys, to setting up, distributing and reporting on our own internal Higher Education unit surveys.

Charles Darwin University is a dual sector University so I also run and report on the VET Learner Questionnaire (LQ) and Employer Questionnaire (EQ).

I'm not the most talkative person and tend to keep to the background with my spreadsheets and various software applications, manipulating data while my boss and colleague talk to people. I did co-present at the 2016 AAIR Forum which was way out of my comfort zone but a good experience.

From your perspective, what are the emerging areas of interest in institutional research?

One emerging area of interest for our small survey team is the work that is currently being done around the SES in relation to external student engagement and how a whole section of questions are not well suited for this modality. The majority of the Charles Darwin University student cohort studies in external mode so how we measure and monitor their engagement and their path to success are of great importance to us.

What do you believe will be the future priorities for institutional research?

Coming from a dual sector university I'd have to say that a review of the VET Learner Questionnaire (LQ) and Employer Questionnaire (EQ) should be a priority. The questions are outdated and it seems to be little more than a pro forma exercise for which I have to apologise to lecturers that I am unable to change the survey instrument. Furthermore, we receive no feedback on the data and results that we are required to lodge each year and, there are no benchmarking opportunities with other RTO's either which is something that would be beneficial for the sector.

Complete this statement: *In my role, I can't operate effectively without ...*

The help and support of my colleague and other member of #teamawesome, Rhianna Harker.

Also music, put in my headphones and good to go.

ASK ANYTHING

Lester D'Souza, Business Analyst, Australian Catholic University wants to know....

Q: How do you calculate completion rate at your institution? What business rules or methodologies do you use?

If you have the answers and are happy to share them, please help Lester out!

editor@aaair.org.au

We will also post the answers in next month's Ask Anything. If you too have a burning work question that you'd like to find out from your AAIR colleagues, [please email them to us](#) and we'd be happy to broadcast them for you!

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Institutional Researcher Issue 6, June 2017

A great way to get involved with the AAIR community is to share your thoughts and ideas. Do you have something you would like to share with your IR colleagues? The next AAIR Newsletter will be published in mid-June. Please send your contributions to the editor@aaair.org.au by **Friday 16 June 2017**.



AAIR on Twitter [@AAIRaustralia](https://twitter.com/AAIRaustralia)



Monica Chen and Tracy Creagh
The Institutional Researcher Editors.

