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Secretariat
Admissions Transparency IWG
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Dear Professor Krause

Comments on the Draft Admissions Transparency Implementation Plan

ECU supports the review and implementation approach outlined in the Admissions Transparency Implementation Plan. Standardised presentation of admissions information and common definitions will benefit, in particular, prospective university students from high schools and those moving to other states for study.

Challenges in transparency still exist when establishing minimum ATAR entry requirements for future years and for some non-ATAR entry pathways, which may vary between universities and between courses within a university.

ECU has the following specific comments on the implementation plan.

Implementation timing

Implementation of the 'best endeavours' version of the proposed information sets is not achievable for 2018 admissions. Marketing material has already been published and disseminated for 2018 entry. Implementation of the new information sets would be feasible for 2019 entry depending on the detail in the final requirements. While the notion of providing this information as a PDF for download is a simple solution given the short timelines, ECU does not support this as it is likely to be a large and unwieldy document unconnected with our existing communications and will likely not be a helpful source of information for potential students.

The remainder of 2017 should be used to finalise the details and definitions for the information sets and implementation of the national platform. The national platform should be developed and considered to be the key source of comparative data between providers.

Four broad groupings to describe applicant basis of admission

The suggested groupings will not be well understood by those outside the sector. In addition, the groupings have the potential to confuse applicants who may qualify for entry under multiple groupings. Further work needs to be undertaken to:

- Clearly define rules to guide classification where an applicant fits into more than one group;
- Clearly define 'recent' in relation to recent secondary education;
- Ensure consistent VET nomenclature which is commonly understood by VET students in all States and territories; and
- Expand the work and life experience grouping nomenclature to make it clear that the STAT test and bridging/enabling courses are included in this grouping.

ECU suggests the following alternative categories:

- a) Recent Secondary Education
- b) Completed TAFE or vocational study or qualification (including in high school)

- c) Completed higher education study or qualification (including enabling or bridging courses)
- d) Skills and other life experience (for mature age entry)

These basis of admission groupings should be codified, and associated with standardised descriptors, to allow proper data collation and comparison over time.

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) thresholds

ECU broadly agrees with the terminology around ATAR thresholds and the move to the use of the term *Adjusted ATAR*. In 3A the title *ATAR-related adjustments* should be simplified to *ATAR Adjustments*.

Proposed whole-of-institution admissions information set

The draft information set at Appendix C is adequate to guide prospective applicants. ECU would support providing the basis of admission data from the most recent full year of commencements as suggested. The information sets 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 have no value to the transparency of admissions or are already adequately covered in the material HEPs already provide to students..

Information on financial assistance and student services does not address any of the recommendations in the Higher Education Standards Panel (HESP) report and could be dropped.

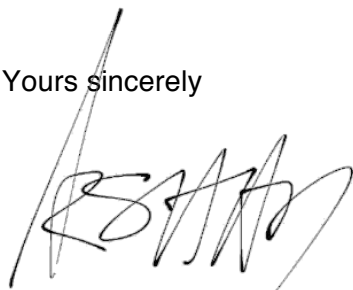
Proposed course admission information set

The draft information set at Appendix D is very detailed and will provide applicants with ample information to compare providers. ECU supports the provision of information on the three expressions of ATAR at Point 2A (i.e.: *lowest ATAR*, *lowest adjusted ATAR* and *minimum ATAR for consideration to enter the next intake*). However, to avoid confusion for prospective students, only one score – *the minimum ATAR for consideration to enter the next intake* – should be included in the course prospectus and the course information systems of universities. The value of data suggested at 2A - *ATAR range for those offered places in most recent year*, is questionable.

Sub-working group and stakeholder consultation

A representative from at least one of the Western Australian universities should be included in any sub-working groups formed. It is also important that the working group include representatives who understand the implementation of these initiatives at an operational and systems level.

Yours sincerely



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