

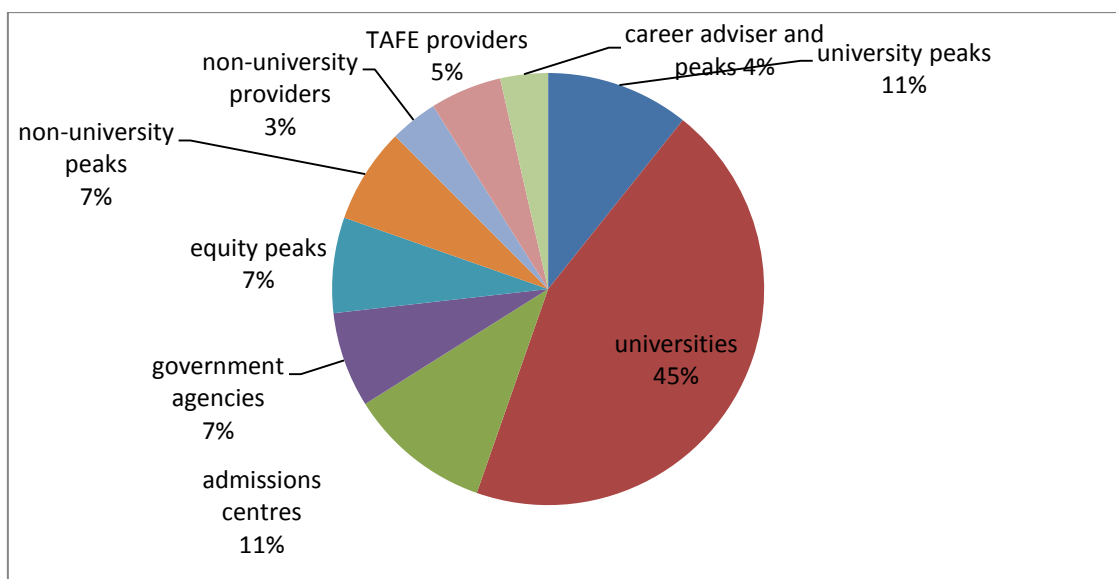
# Admissions Transparency Implementation Plan Stakeholder Consultation

## Summary

### Overview of submissions

A draft Admissions Transparency Implementation Plan (the plan) was circulated to stakeholders on 1 May 2017 seeking written submissions. 54 submissions were received in total. Universities and university peak bodies accounted for 56 per cent of the total submissions. Tertiary Admissions Centres (TACs) made up 11 per cent of the submissions, followed by 7 per cent from the higher education equity peak bodies, 7 per cent from government agencies, and 5 per cent from TAFE providers. Non-university providers and peak bodies made up 10 per cent of the total submissions. The other 4 per cent came from career advisers and peak bodies.

### Where the submissions came from



A list of organisations and individuals that made submissions is at [Attachment A](#).

### Additional stakeholder consultations:

The Admissions Transparency Implementation Working Group (IWG) organised face-to-face and tele-conference meetings with 31 organisations on 8 May 2017. In addition, the IWG chair and secretariat met with a number of other organisations (summary of these stakeholders at [Attachment B](#)).

### General themes

- **Overall comments, including timelines:**
  - There is overwhelming support for the admissions transparency work and the IWG's role in developing an approach to implementation.
  - There is broad support for the general approach suggested in the draft plan; however the timeframe is seen as very challenging, particularly for the scope of information and action proposed in the draft plan.
  - There is general support for the six principles proposed in the plan, with the majority of submissions strongly advocating a student-centred approach and/or a national approach.

- Stakeholders have welcomed a phased approach to implementation and sought clarification on the specific terms of a 'best endeavours' approach in 2017. This included seeking acknowledgement of the range of information which currently available or already in train through Tertiary Admission Centres (TACs) for 2018.
- **Communication strategies to implement the plan:**
  - Road- testing of the information sets is needed with key stakeholders, including students, teachers, career advisers, and admissions practitioners.
  - For recent secondary school leavers there should be more focus on non-Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) applicants.
  - A post-implementation review should be included in the plan to ensure objectives have been met.
  - Professional accreditation bodies may need to be consulted, such as initial teacher education, engineering, law and medicine.
  - Messages to prospective students in relation to the transition arrangement in 2017-2018 need to be developed and communicated clearly.
  - Suggest a communication and training plan be developed to support implementation by institutions.
- **Information sets:**
  - There was some concern about the range of content in the information sets – more so in relation to the 2017 requirements than the longer-term.
  - The volume of information required is challenging for providers.
  - Some suggest that information should not be provided where it is available elsewhere (however, the proposal in the plan is to *replace* current information so students have one source of information, rather than run in parallel)
  - Some are concerned that greater transparency of intake and ATAR profiles may be interpreted as proxy measures of quality.
  - The suggested information sets should be tested with stakeholders.
  - Providing detailed and clear guidelines, including data definitions, 'user-cases' for templates would help stakeholders to better understand the information.
  - Support for inclusion of information on career and study destinations and non-academic supports (particularly for students with disability or disadvantage).
- **ATAR thresholds:**
  - Strong support for the proposed move away from current terms like "clearly-in" and "cut-off" to functional descriptions, though some did defend the terms like "clearly in" and "cut-off", despite capacity for gaming.
  - Feedback from TACs but also some others that the term "Selection Rank" is preferred over the proposed use of "adjusted ATAR". It is more technically accurate and, despite the complexity in explaining it, is already in common enough usage to be understood well enough in context.
  - Some submissions highlighted a perception that the work around transparency in admissions and information sets are overly focused on school leavers and ATAR.
  - Several submissions sought clarity on whether ATAR profiles should include students not selected on the basis of ATAR.
  - Some caution with the new ATAR terminology against misleading prospective students on their likelihood of receiving an offer – testing with students is critical.
- **Common terminology:**
  - Communication of terminology changes will be critical to give the new terminology credence, including with media.
  - Some mixed messages from TACs on language – e.g. keen to not relate everything to school leavers but also keen to retain "early" offer and a broader "non-school leaver" applicant category. TACs also keen to retain "bonus points" rather than "adjustment factors" on the basis this is the language students know.

- Concern that applicants may not identify themselves correctly to the student background groups, e.g.
  - for current Year 12 students.
  - for those who completed Year 12 more than two years ago, but need to apply under work/life experience. [note these are not intended to guide choices students need to make, these are just indicators for students on where to find the most relevant information]
- Other student categories for possible inclusion raised in the submissions:
  - asylum seekers or refugees;
  - international students studying VCE in Australia;
  - domestic students studying Year 12 overseas
- **Streamlined approach to manage cross-border applications and the role of Tertiary Admissions Centres (TACs):**
  - TACs support a streamlined approach to manage cross-border applications and have technical capability to deliver it, provided resource implications are dealt with.
  - Some providers suggest the TACs be tasked with data and terminology harmonisation.
  - Currently, the University of Tasmania is the TAC for Tasmania. Questions around how it will handle applications for mainland universities.
- **Compliance:**
  - The role of performance metrics and TEQSA audits in relation to admissions transparency was questioned.
  - Clarity was sought around further consultation and engagement on the 7.5% funding performance measure for universities announced in the 2017-18 Budget.
  - Questions around how to incentivise non-university providers to implement the plan, given there was no government performance funding link.
- **Data quality and validity:**
  - Suggestion that required data should be captured by the Commonwealth to deliver the required reporting.
  - Consistency is needed in the interpretation of student groupings and other definitions in information sets.
  - Clarification needed on how to publish and report data for direct applications, and how to report current and historical data consistently.
  - It would be inefficient to have to develop two different types of data to meet the requirements of the plan and subsequently to report for performance measurement and accountability purposes.
  - Concerns around the practicality of publishing information on websites with a pdf version alongside existing information from providers.
  - Questions around mode of delivery – how to address courses offered on line: student cohorts vary significantly in their backgrounds and admission profiles.
- **National information platform:**
  - Support to include comparative data between providers.
  - Concerns around the tight timeframe proposed to establish stage one of a national information platform.

## List of Submissions

1. Name withheld
2. University of Western Australia (UWA)
3. Deakin University
4. Box Hill Institute
5. NSW Department of Education
6. University of Newcastle
7. Griffith University
8. Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC)
9. Queensland University of Technology (QUT)
10. Edith Cowan University (ECU)
11. Alphacrucis College (AC)
12. University of Notre Dame
13. Central Queensland University (CQU)
14. Regional Universities Network (RUN)
15. Group of Eight (Go8)
16. University of Sydney
17. Victoria University
18. Heads of Student Administration (HoSA)
19. University of Technology Sydney (UTS)
20. Macquarie University
21. RMIT University
22. Australian Technology Network (ATN)
23. University of South Australia
24. Confidential
25. Charles Sturt University (CSU)
26. University of Divinity
27. University of Southern Queensland (USQ)
28. University of Wollongong (UOW)
29. Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC)
30. Swinburne University of Technology
31. University of Queensland (UQ)
32. La Trobe University
33. Southern Cross University
34. National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Consortium (NATSIHEC)
35. Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET)
36. Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO)
37. Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC)
38. Open Universities Australia (OUA)
39. South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC)
40. The Australasian Conference of Tertiary Admission Centres (ACTAC)
41. Universities Admissions Centre (UAC)
42. Australian Tertiary Education Network on Disability (ATEND)
43. JMC Academy

44. Holmesglen Institute
45. TAFE NSW
46. Equity Practitioners in Higher Education (EPHEA)
47. Australian Association of Special Education (AASE)
48. University of Tasmania
49. Universities Australia (UA)
50. Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA)
51. Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)
52. Council of Private Higher Education (COPHE)
53. Northern Territory Department of Education
54. Innovative Research Universities (IRU)

## Stakeholders met with

1. Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA)
2. Australian Association of Special Education (AASE)
3. Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI)
4. Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET)
5. Australian Curriculum , Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA)
6. Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)
7. Australian Medical Students Association (AMSA)
8. Australian Network of University Planners (ANUP)
9. Australian Parents Council (APC)
10. Australian Secondary Principals Association (ASPA)
11. Australian Technology Network (ATN)
12. Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC)
13. Australasian Conference of Tertiary Admission Centres (ACTAC)
14. Career Development Association of Australia (CDAA)
15. Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA)
16. Catholic School Parents Australia (CSPA)
17. Catholic Secondary Principals Association (CaSPA)
18. Council of Australian Postgraduate Association (CAPA)
19. Council of Private Higher Education (COPHE)
20. Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Academic) & (Corporate)
21. Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australia (EPHEA)
22. Federal Council of the Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Australia (ICPA Australia)
23. Group of Eight (Go8)
24. Higher Education Officials Network
25. Innovative Research Universities (IRU)
26. JMC Academy
27. National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Consortium(NATSIHEC)
28. National Association of Australian University Colleges (NAAUC)
29. National Union of Students (NUS)
30. Principals Australia Institute (PAI)
31. Regional Universities Network (RUN)
32. TAFE Directors Australia (TDA)
33. The Australian Tertiary Education Network on Disability (ATEND)
34. Universities Australia (UA)