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The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

# Interim Report: First steps for improving educational opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

House of Representatives  
Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs

May 2016  
Canberra

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## Membership of the Committee

Chair	The Hon Dr Sharman Stone MP	
Deputy Chair	The Hon Mr Warren Snowdon MP	
Members	Ms Sharon Claydon MP <small>(from 19/10/15)</small>	Mr Bert van Manen MP <small>(to 19/10/15)</small>
	Mr Mark Coulton MP	The Hon Mr Shayne Neumann MP
	The Hon Warren Entsch MP	Mr Graham Perrett MP
	Mr Andrew Giles MP <small>(to 19/10/15)</small>	Ms Melissa Price MP <small>(to 11/11/15)</small>
	Mr Andrew Lamming MP	Mr Rowan Ramsey MP

## Committee Secretariat

Committee Secretary	Dr Anna Dacre
Senior Research Officer	Ms Lauren Wilson
Administrative Officer	Ms Jessica Hargreaves



# List of recommendations

## 2 ABSTUDY

### Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the Department of Human Services undertake an independent review of ABSTUDY with a view to the program being redesigned and the new system being fully operational at the latest by 30 June 2017.

## 3 Issues for Further Consideration

### Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that, as a matter of urgency, the Australian Government allocate an additional portion of the remaining funds available through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy to girls' education programs, comparable to that of boys' programs previously allocated funding through the Strategy, so to ensure gender equity.

### Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends that in evaluating future grant applications, the Australian Government ensure that there is equity in the number and especially the type of girls' and boys' education programs funded, and if necessary, undertake to fund additional programs to ensure gender equity.

### Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that, in the 45<sup>th</sup> Parliament, the Minister for Indigenous Affairs refer to the Indigenous Affairs Committee the Inquiry into educational opportunities and boarding arrangements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.