

Committee Secretary
Senate Education and Employment Committees
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

27 February 2018

Re: Committee Inquiry into the *Higher Education Support Legislation Amendment (Student Loan Sustainability) Bill 2018*

Dear Sir/Madam

The University of Canberra thanks the Education and Employment Legislation Committee for the opportunity to respond to the *Higher Education Support Legislation Amendment (Student Loan Sustainability) Bill 2018*. The university would like to make a short statement in regards the bill for the Committee's consideration.

Whilst the university believes there is a balance between the benefits to society and the individual with attainment of a degree, we believe that the current settings in relation to student costs and loan repayments strike the right balance. The university opposes any step that will reduce the likelihood of students aspiring to achieve a tertiary education, and so opposes any lowering of the current thresholds or indexing the threshold amounts to the Consumer Price Index.

The university strongly supports the encouragement of lifelong learning in order to meet the changing demands of the world of work. The university does not agree that there should be a limit on student loans for education. This is contrary to the concept of lifelong learning as it places an upper limit on the learning that would be funded and therefore, for most people, undertaken. As Australians age slower, retire later and face increasingly rapid rates of change, the need for updating or acquiring new skills will occur later and more frequently through a person's life. There should be no cap on the ability to access funding for education.

For these reasons, the university encourages the committee to reject the proposed legislation and keep the current arrangements in place.

Yours sincerely

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