

C25/141735

2 December 2025

Secretariat
Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Via email to: eec.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Secretariat

**Inquiry into the quality of governance at Australian higher education providers
Questions on Notice**

In response to additional questions raised by Senator Faruqi and received by Flinders University on 18 November 2025, we provide the following responses:

Question 1: *Is there a retention package for the Vice-Chancellor in his contract, if so how much is it?*

Answer: The Vice-Chancellor's remuneration package is structured to support retention. The total value of remuneration is publicly reported each year in the University's Annual Financial Statements and audited by the Auditor-General of South Australia.

Question 2: *Does your institution have any partnerships, investments or links with any weapons companies or associated entities?*

Answer: Flinders maintains an Investment Policy that prioritises sustainable outcomes by ensuring its investment portfolio aligns with our environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles. Our ESG principles include strict requirements that prevent the university investing in companies that manufacture controversial weapons (refer to Attachment A).

Question 3: *Does your institution have any partnerships, investments or links with any fossil fuel companies or associated entities?*

Answer: Flinders maintains an Investment Policy that prioritises sustainable outcomes by ensuring its investment portfolio aligns with our environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles. Our ESG principles include strict requirements that prevent investments into companies whose major business relates to fossil fuels with the sole exception of metallurgical coal (refer to Attachment A).

Question 4: *Does your institution have any partnerships, investments or links with any gambling companies or associated entities?*

Answer: Flinders maintains an Investment Policy that prioritises sustainable outcomes by ensuring its investment portfolio aligns with our environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles. Our ESG principles include strict requirements that

prevent investments into companies whose major business relates to gambling (refer to Attachment A).

Question 5: Does your institution have any partnerships, investments or links with any tobacco companies or associated entities?

Answer: Flinders maintains an Investment Policy that prioritises sustainable outcomes by ensuring its investment portfolio aligns with our environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles. Our ESG principles include strict requirements that prevent investments into companies whose major business relates to tobacco (refer to Attachment A).

Question 6:

a. Could you please clarify the response provided or correct the record based on the information above?

Answer: On 19 November 2025, Flinders University advised the Committee that, subsequent to the hearing, Professor Stirling was informed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) that advice had been received on 23 September 2025 confirming one of the projects referred to in Professor Stirling's evidence was successful in a small funding bid. The funding was granted to a group that included one individual affected by the change process.

The affected staff member is a marine biologist who was part of a team that received a \$10,000 grant for a short project related to the algal bloom.

b. Is the last level D physical oceanographer going to be replaced by level B marine ecologists?

Answer: There is a position in physical oceanography that is impacted by the changes currently underway in the College of Science and Engineering. For clarity, this position is not associated with any funded research projects related to the algal bloom. Given that the position is to be disestablished, it cannot be replaced by an equivalent role.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this evidence to the Committee.

Yours sincerely



Jayne Flaherty
Chief of Staff

Attachment 1

ESG Strategy Application extract from Flinders University's Investment Strategy

Element	ESG Tolerance Description
Fossil Fuels	Derive greater than 10% revenue from the production and/or distribution of thermal coal, oil and gas, thermal sands. Metallurgical coal is excluded from the definition given that there is no substitute available today and this coal is essential in the industrial steel making process required to transition to a net zero world.
Tobacco	Derive greater than 5% of revenue from the production of tobacco.
Gambling	Derive greater than 10% revenue from the operation or licencing from gambling facilities.
Controversial Weapons	Companies with any revenue from the production and/or distribution from controversial weapons.
Total listed equity and fixed income portfolio	The combined listed equity and fixed income portfolio will maintain a carbon footprint generally at least 30% below the index level.