

Thank you for inviting Charles Darwin University (CDU) to take part in the Senate Inquiry into the quality of governance at Australian higher education providers. I am writing to provide response to the on-notice questions raised by Senator Faruqi following the hearing on 12 November 2025.

**1. Does your institution have any partnerships, investments or links with any weapons companies or associated entities?**

CDU does not have partnerships or investments with companies engaged in weapons manufacturing. We do engage with defence organisations and defence adjacent. These activities, however, support national capability and are not related to weapons production.

**2. Does your institution have any partnerships, investments or links with any fossil fuel companies or associated entities?**

CDU engages with companies connected to the resources and energy sectors, primarily through research collaboration, workforce development, and scholarship support. These relationships are strongly oriented toward mitigation efforts, emissions reduction, transition technologies, improved environmental management, and building the skilled workforce. Our partnerships in this space are governed by ethical and strategic frameworks that prioritise responsible research and alignment with long-term sustainability objectives.

**3. Does your institution have any partnerships, investments or links with any gambling companies or associated entities?**

To the best of our knowledge and based on our governance and investment policies, CDU does not maintain any partnerships or intentional investments and links with gambling companies or related entities.

**4. Does your institution have any partnerships, investments or links with any tobacco companies or associated entities?**

To the best of our knowledge and based on our governance and investment policies, CDU does not maintain any partnerships or intentional investments and links with tobacco companies or related entities.

**5. Four years down the line from the Job Ready Graduates (JRG) fee hikes, what impacts are you seeing?**

The differential fee settings have discouraged enrolments in some disciplines that are vital to regional workforce needs, especially in teaching and social services, and have led to higher student debt in areas still critically needed in the Territory. The pricing distortions have not aligned with real world labour market demand and have challenged smaller regional universities with already tight funding margins.

**a. Do you agree that the government should urgently scrap the JRG fee hikes and funding cuts?**

CDU support moving to a fairer and more evidence-based model that restores affordability for students and sustainability for universities. Rather than simply unwinding JRG, CDU encourage its replacement with a new framework that better reflects workforce needs, supports regional and equity participation, and ensures adequate resourcing for quality delivery.