

Senate Standing Committees on Education and Employment

Quality of governance at Australian higher education providers

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Date of hearing: 12 August 2025

Outcome: Higher Education, Research and International

Department of Education Question No. IQ25-000025

Senator Maria Kovacic on 12 August 2025, Proof Hansard page 49

Clarification on governing body membership in departmental submission

Question

Senator KOVACIC:...I have a question for the department. Your submission identified a key area of the government's work being, 'membership of governing bodies, including ensuring additional involvement of people with expertise in the business of universities.' Could you please tell me what this actually means? Is it in contradiction—and in my mind it might be—with several submissions that highlight the detrimental effect of such modes of thinking when we're trying to provide free and open academia?

Ms MOHR: Can you refer me to the page of the submission that you're talking about, so I can make sure I'm answering the question?

Senator KOVACIC: I'll have to find it.

Ms MOHR: I've got the submission in front of me. I'm just trying to find the right page so that I can make sure that we're answering the question effectively.

Senator KOVACIC: If you like, you can take that on notice. I'd have to go and look for it myself. Before, I didn't mark it up. So that's fine—if you're happy to provide that on notice.

Answer

The Department of Education's submission to the Senate inquiry into the quality of governance at Australian higher education providers references work being undertaken with States and Territories in response to Priority Action 5 of the Australian Universities Accord Interim Report - Department of Education, Australian Government (p.13) available at www.education.gov.au/australian-universities-accord/resources/accord-interim-report.