



Higher Education Support Amendment (University College London) Bill 2010

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Higher Education Support Amendment (University College London) Bill 2010

Date introduced: 4 February 2010

House: House of Representatives

Portfolio: Education

Commencement: 1 January 2010

Links: The [relevant links](#) to the Bill, Explanatory Memorandum and second reading speech can be accessed via BillsNet, which is at <http://www.aph.gov.au/bills/>. When Bills have been passed they can be found at ComLaw, which is at <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/>.

Purpose

Higher Education Support Amendment (University College London) Bill 2010 (the Bill) provides for University College London to be added to the list of Table C providers in section 16-22 of *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (the Act) so that University College London domestic students can access FEE-HELP.

Background

Table C Providers

The *Higher Education Legislation Amendment (2005 Measures No. 4) Act 2005* (the amending Act) amended the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* to permit the operation of foreign higher education providers in Australia. The amending Act created a new category of higher education providers – Table C providers which are overseas higher education institutions with Australian branches. These providers and their students are explicitly excluded from the Commonwealth Grant Scheme and other grants made under the Act, Commonwealth scholarships and the HECS-HELP scheme. However, the Australian students of Table C providers have access to FEE-HELP.

To be eligible for listing as a Table C provider, a foreign University must first have been approved to operate in Australia by the relevant state or territory under the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes (National Protocols).

The 2005 legislative change was prompted by a proposal by Carnegie Mellon University (a private US institution with around 8000 undergraduate and postgraduate students) to establish an Australian campus. On 29 October 2004 the State of South Australia and Carnegie Mellon signed Heads of Agreement expressing their intention to collaborate in

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the establishment of a privately-owned university in Adelaide. The South Australian Government committed up to \$20 million over four years to assist with the establishment of the University.¹

Similarly, the South Australian Government has supported (in collaboration with oil and gas company Santos) the establishment of University College London's Adelaide campus with \$4 million towards the refurbishment of premises in the Torrens Building and support for operations over the College's first seven years.²

University College London has been approved to operate as a higher education provider in Australia by the South Australian government under the National Protocols. From Semester 1 2010, University College London will offer an industry-focused Masters degree in Energy and Resources developed for the Adelaide campus.³

FEE-HELP

The FEE-HELP scheme is administered by Part 3-3 of the Act. It allows a domestic student enrolled in a full fee paying course to FEE-HELP assistance of up to \$85,062 to pay tuition fees. The assistance is paid to the higher education provider and the loan is repaid, like other HECS-HELP loans, through the tax system once the student's income is above the minimum threshold for compulsory repayment.

Financial implications

The Explanatory Memorandum states 'there is no financial impact resulting from this amendment'. However the Bill will allow a relatively small number of extra students to access FEE-HELP.

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1. For background see: K Jackson, *Higher Education Legislation Amendment (2005 Measures No.4) Bill 2005*, Bills digest, no. 49, 2005-06, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 2005, viewed 5 February 2010, <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/bd/2005-06/06bd049.pdf>
 2. M Rann (Premier South Australia), *Leading British uni to open Adelaide campus*, media release, Adelaide, 30 May 2008, viewed 5 February 2010, <http://www.ministers.sa.gov.au/news.php?id=3213>
 3. University College London, *UCL to establish an Asia-Pacific base from 2009*, media release, London, 12 December 2008, viewed 5 February 2010, <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/media/library/AustraliaDecember>

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Main provisions

Schedule 1

Item 1 proposes to add University College London to the list of Table C providers in the table under subsection 16-22(1) of the Act.

Item 2(1) proposes that the amendment will apply to courses offered by the University College London on or after 1 January 2010.

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