



# Higher Education Review *Universities Accord*

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Interim Report from the Review Panel (July 2023)

*NTEU Public Policy & Strategic Research Unit*

# NTEU Priorities for Accord process:

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Priority 1 : Secure and Valued Higher Education Employment (including Future Fund idea, workplace reform)

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Priority 2: Higher Education Funding Reform, drop problematic Job Ready Graduate changes

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Priority 3: Regulation and Governance of Higher Education

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Priority 4: Sustainability and Equitable Access to Higher Education





Australian Government

# Australian Universities Accord

Interim Report

The Review states that it has found that, without change, the higher education system will “rapidly become unfit for purpose”.

The Review has put forward **ten possible ‘system shifts’** which it believes are needed to improve the higher education system.

To support these ‘**shifts**’ the Report has **76 ‘discussion points’** grouped under **three main headings**.

Interim Report was made alongside **five immediate policy changes**.





# Press Club Announcement & Interim Report Release

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## 5 Priority policies – immediate action

(3 were NTEU Asks)

More university study centers (university study hubs) in the regions, to extend to outer suburban areas

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Drop 50% fail rule for HELP exclusion (JRG policy)

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Extend demand driven program to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

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Extend current funding guarantee for CSP by a further 2 years (JRG transition policy)

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Governance reform – universities to be ‘exemplary employers’, safe campuses, board representation

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# Governance Reforms:

*a spikey problem at the core of higher education*


Minister Clare has written to all state education ministers re proposal for governance reform & working party



Focus on workplace reforms, safety/consent, governance body membership (staff & student)



Accord process now expanded to reform of State based university Acts – a bigger job!





The vision of the Review is that by 2035, Australia's higher education system will see:

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An **integrated tertiary system**, with a commitment to access for everyone with the potential and application, achieving significant growth in pursuit of ambitious national skills and equity targets.

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**First Nations** will be at the heart of higher education.

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There will be **population parity** in participation by 2035, supported by **student-centred, needs-based funding**.

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There will be systematic investment in **student support** and **equitable, efficient HELP** arrangements.

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**Research will be reprioritised**, to strengthen its foundations and bring about widespread impact through translation and use.

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**Learning and teaching will be transformed**, with an ambitious commitment to student experience and use of technology.

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**Higher education and vocational education will be connected** through pathways, partnership and an up-to-date qualifications framework.

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Re-skilling and lifelong learning will be provided through more **modular, stackable qualifications**, including **microcredentials**, with full scaffolding and pathways.

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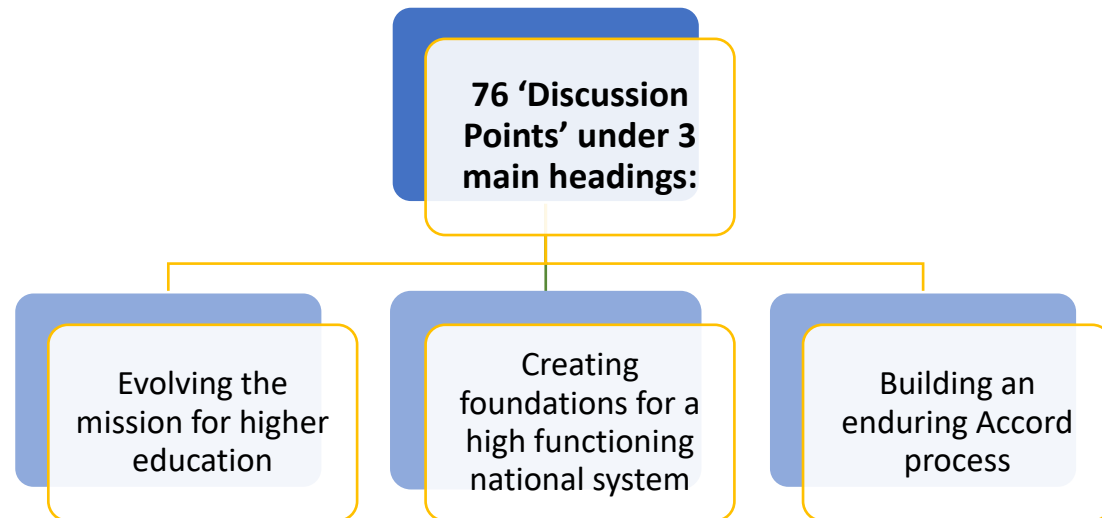
A new approach to **mission-based compacts** will address future planning, distinctive place-based impact, and **institutional governance responsibilities**.

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**National governance** will be coordinated and forward-looking through a new **Tertiary Education Commission**.



# Interim Report: *considering the future of Higher Education*



# Ideas are intended to create discussion & debate. NTEU has identified 14 main points to prioritise:

Expand tertiary ed system, integrating VET & higher ed, more/new specialized institutions (uni study hubs, nat regional uni)

Workplace changes via governance reform, unis to be 'exemplary employers'

Tertiary education commission - policy advice, research, new pricing authority

Change focus, operation of the tertiary ed regulators

Pedagogical change – industry, soft skills, expansion of microcredentials, more online learning integration

Universal student support & needs based funding model, incentivize funding for student equity cohorts

Reversing JRG changes to tuition fee levels

Research & research training reforms, funding the full costs of research

Prioritising First Nations in higher ed, 'self determination' approach to both policy & funding

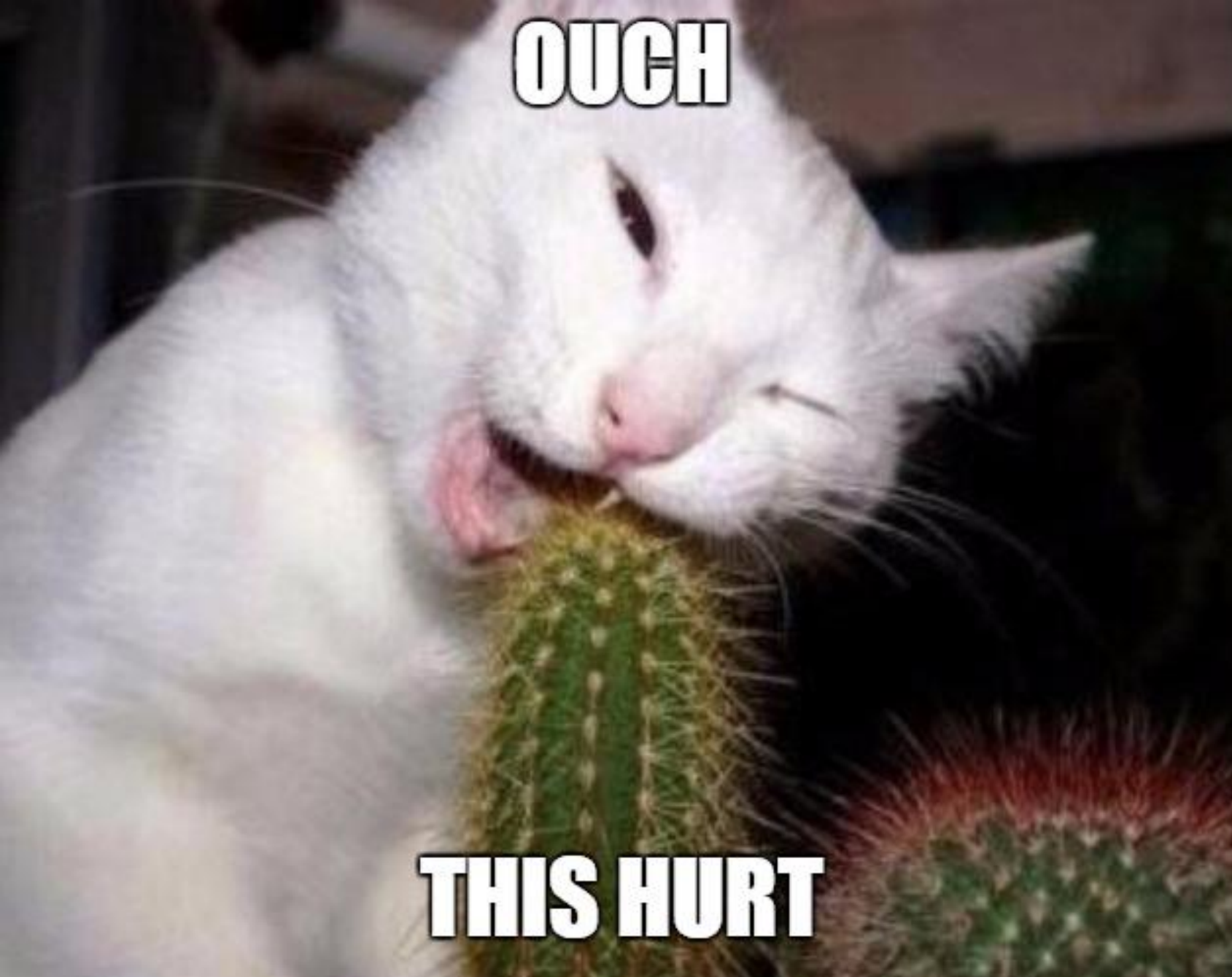
National student ombudsman

Sector wide reforms to student support and equity measures

Levy on international student fees;

International ed less 'industry', more focus on soft diplomacy





**Some of these  
'spikey' ideas may  
be more painful  
for higher ed staff  
and students**

# Issues of Concern for NTEU (winners & losers?)

Specialisation in an expanded system, integrating VET & Higher Ed

Funding changes, implications of shift to 'needs based' funding model

Changes in teaching pedagogy and focus, more shift to online delivery

Resourcing for increased participation of student equity groups

Micro credentials and qualification 'stacking'

Workforce issues – workload arrangements falsely linked to insecure work by bosses

More details needed on research – funding problems noted but not fully addressed

New Tertiary Education Commission – needs representation of uni staff

# Where to from here?



**Safely Moving  
an Echidna**





# Opportunities to influence outcomes

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- NTEU Pledge – almost 6,000 signatures. To go to Accord panel
  - New NTEU Petition to go to the Minister with specific asks
  - State Education Ministers – contact, advocacy work at the state/territory level now
  - Working with others in the sector (other unions, sector & student groups)
  - NTEU continues to be part of the Ministerial Advisory Group
  - NTEU response to Interim Report – due Sept 1
  - Timeline for Expert Review Panel to make final report end of 2023
  - Government to respond in 2024, NTEU to continue advocacy and campaign work into next year

