

27 NOVEMBER 2024

REGIONAL STUDENTS AMONG THE BIGGEST WINNERS FROM LEGISLATION ENACTING KEY UNIVERSITIES ACCORD RECOMMENDATIONS

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) welcomes the passing of legislation designed to provide greater university access and cost-of-study relief to millions of Australians, particularly those living in regional areas.

The passing of the Universities Accord (Student Support and Other Measures) Bill 2024 (the Bill) delivers upon key recommendations from the Australian Universities Accord (the accord), including:

- The introduction of the Commonwealth Prac Payment from 1 July 2025, assisting nursing, social work and midwifery students with the costs of meeting their compulsory placement obligations.
- More favourable indexation arrangements applied to existing and future student loan debts.
- The expansion of FEE-FREE University Ready Courses, which helps bridge the gap between school and university for aspiring students.

Quotes attributable to RUN Chief Executive Office, Alec Webb:

“These reforms are important because we know that the highest proportions of students from low socio-economic backgrounds study at regional universities, so the measures associated with this bill will undoubtedly favour regional students.

“Regional Australians aged 25-35 are approximately only half as likely as their metropolitan counterparts to attain a university Bachelor’s degree, which is a major factor fuelling regional skills shortages.

“Measures that are designed to make university more accessible and more affordable to regional students will always be welcomed by RUN.

“We are confident that these measures – when combined with the eventual implementation of the fuller suite of recommendations from the Accord – will really start to turn the dial on the university attainment rates of regional Australia.

“We thank the Government for their ongoing work in this area, alongside all Parliamentarians who are supporting the reforms associated with the Accord.”

For media enquiries:

Alec Webb, Chief Executive Officer, 0408 482 736

www.run.edu.au