



The Hon Jason Clare MP
Minister for Education

Reference: M523-000195

Professor Mary O'Kane AC
Chair, Australian Universities Accord Panel
Accord Secretariat
Department of Education
GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA ACT 2601

By email: **s 47F**cc: AustralianUniversitiesAccord@education.gov.au

Dear Professor O'Kane AC

I am writing to request that the Australian Universities Accord Panel (the Panel) urgently consider making recommendations regarding the Government's 20,000 additional Commonwealth supported places election commitment in the Panel's final report.

As part of the 2022-23 Budget the Government committed to deliver 20,000 commencing Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs) in 2023 and 2024. The measure aims to tackle skills shortages and give more students from under-represented backgrounds the chance to go to university.

Recent economic conditions and a strong labour market have led to a significant softening of demand for higher education. As a consequence, many higher education providers that received these additional CSPs have been unable to fill them in 2023. Softening demand for higher education looks likely to persist in 2024.

Increasing higher education attainment remains critical to addressing the nation's long-term skills needs. It is therefore important that the goals of this measure are still achieved.

Actions to address the issue of unused places from this measure will be affected by Panel recommendations for future funding settings and accessibility for students from under-represented backgrounds. In this context, I request that you consider and advise on options to deliver on the intent of the 20,000 places measure in the Panel's final report.

I thank you and the Panel for your urgent consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely,


JASON CLARE

10/12/2023

Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600