

1 June 2011

Higher Education Support Amendment Bill

The **Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN)** says passage of the Federal Government's *Higher Education Support Amendment (Demand driven system and other changes) Bill 2011* is a critical component of university reform which must be supported.

ATN Chair, Professor Jeanette Hacket said the legislation, the majority of which is supported by the Coalition, achieves the goal of enabling universities to be funded for each enrolled undergraduate place major parties.

"Both of the major parties support this fundamental element - a key recommendation by the Bradley review. We would hope to see that the integrity of the legislation is preserved to ensure these reforms can be implemented," Professor Hacket said.

"We would not wish to see this Bill delayed over what appear to be relatively minor, and in the main unnecessary amendments to the legislation."

Professor Hacket said the abolition of the learning entitlement would mean less red tape for the sector – as it is administratively complex to implement - and ensure resources could be better directed toward teaching and learning.

"The Bill will also make it easier for students – including mature-aged students – to return to university. The ATN believes this to be a particularly important aspect of the legislation when considering the current skills shortage being faced by industry. This is in addition to the government's recent policy reforms to encourage students from disadvantaged backgrounds to study at university, which is encouraged by the ATN."

The Bill and its amendments will help to ensure that the university sector is able to continue providing high quality education, which is something the ATN strongly supports.

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