



EMBARGOED MIDNIGHT 3 NOVEMBER

MEDIA RELEASE

STUDENT SUPPORT AN ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The nation's leading technology universities say today's announcement by Minister Ellis of a package to assist universities in delivering essential student services shows commitment to investing in the future of Australia's graduates.

The Australian Technology Network group of universities (ATN) particularly welcomed increased target funding in areas of health, counselling, employment and welfare support services. These are particularly important for universities that have a significant proportion of students facing economic and social disadvantage.

ATN Chair and Vice Chancellor of RMIT University, Professor Margaret Gardner, AO, said it was encouraging to see the government recognising the importance of student services and the role universities play in providing those services. "We pride ourselves on our commitment to an education for all based on access and equity. VSU was a significant issue for our institutions as it affected our ability to support core values of equitable access and our financial capacity to sustain services with are important to our students", Professor Gardner said.

ATN universities enroll more than 22% of the nation's students, 19% of low SES students, 14% of disabled students and 17% of indigenous students. Retention rates across the ATN of disadvantaged students are above the national average.

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