

1. Responses to the recommendations drawn from the research - comments from practitioners

- Support them
- Pleased to see the recognition of scholarships being part of the holistic support
- It would benefit from a recommendation about the need for definitions of scholarships vs bursary vs fee waiver vs textbook help vs Loan vs accommodation support.
- Add recommendation that universities look at their criteria for financial support to target it to students not likely to get in who happen to be in equity group, not high ATAR equity group.
- Good to use TAC Equity ranking scheme
- Importance of evaluating impact.
- Flexibility in metrics which are based on mixed methodology
- Clear definitions needed re what is a scholarship, a grant, fee waiver etc.
- Concern re recommendation 2:
 - Is HEPP a possible source – concerning if this is.
 - Capacity of different institutions to generate a source of funding.
- 3 years wider scope for planning of equity scholarship programs.
- General agreement with the recommendations
- We note importance of Recommendation 4 – need to be holistic approach – delivering support & ‘value adds’ that lead to same graduate outcomes as other cohorts.
- Perhaps unrealistic to suggest annual review (Rec &) perhaps biannual.
- Perhaps Recommendation 4 should be made more strongly to reflect the importance of supporting access, retention & completion.

2. How might universities target the funds to meet their individual social equity targets?

- Retention
- Review eligibility criteria
- Emphasising/ valuing students – sense of belonging – link to other initiatives such as jobs/ work on campus/ other services.
- Commencing students need money before census date – Semester 1.
- Review the student demographics each couple of years to see if there is a change in need
- View Students more holistically
- Develop a ‘universal’ set of criteria.
- Scholarships – packaged options more flexible – Vouchers
 - Accommodation
 - Fees
- Support services/ holistic approach – mentoring, loans, vouchers, counselling
- A coordinated approach to supporting students – engaging several areas across the university.
- Move away from Merit based to bursaries – packaged & flexible that give students choice
- If talking 1:5 then % Scholarships % Outreach % Support.

3 What principles should inform federal policy on Commonwealth Scholarships going into the future?

- Not use blunt criteria (like post codes), need flexibility to recognise local context, diversity, need uni autonomy.
- Still require reporting to be accountable for use of the funds
- The key criteria should be what system/ criteria for Commonwealth Scholarships or Widening Participation \$ will have. The must impact on access, retention, completion.
- Need to encourage work from primary school onwards.
- Should never be a loan should always be a grant
- Adopt a broad view on what need is and how it is defined.
- Equity Scholarships not to be used as marketing tools – regional universities would struggle to compete with larger universities.
- Allow flexibility to pay monies up front.
- Students need to maintain option to choose course & university. Moving funds based on percentage of LSES does not necessarily target all students of need. Many universities with high number of students have more LSES students than regional universities. Students in regional areas should not be restricted to these universities in other regions.
- That the 1:5 is actually for:
 1. Scholarships
 2. Outreach
 3. Support
- A % on each (broad) should be indicated so that the 3 pronged holistic approach is taken. The English model could be examined as a guide (where each year a greater % is being spent on outreach and a smaller % on scholarships as degree has gone on).