



The Honourable Bill Shorten, Vice-Chancellor and President, University of Canberra



Within an hour of completing his responsibilities as a Cabinet Minister at Parliament House in January 2025, Bill Shorten crossed town and began work in his new role as Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Canberra.

The former leader of the Australian Labor Party (2013-2019), co-architect of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, one of Australia's most important social reforms, does not waste time.

Bill's early career was in the union movement, organising for the Australian Workers' Union, Australia's oldest. As national secretary he was CEO of the union for 6 years, employing hundreds of staff, managing its multi-million-dollar property portfolio and forging positive relationships with institutions and organisations spanning the sectors of the Australian economy.

He was also a Director of Australian Super for nearly 10 years, helping to create Australia's largest superannuation fund.

Familiarity with the higher education sector was instilled in Bill early. His mother and aunt were academics. Bill earned three degrees - Bachelor of Arts (Monash), Bachelor of Law (Monash) and a Masters of Business Administration (University of Melbourne Business School).

Elected in 2007 to the first of six successive terms as the Member for Maribyrnong in the Federal Parliament, Bill soon had responsibilities as a parliamentary secretary, assistant minister and later Cabinet Minister across a varied range of executive government fields: disabilities and children's services (where the NDIS was born); bushfire recovery, assistant Treasurer, financial services and superannuation; education; employment and workplace relations; and NDIS and government services.

During his six years as Opposition Leader, he fought two federal election campaigns.

As its Vice-Chancellor and President, Bill's broad aim for the University of Canberra is continuous improvement – in the student experience, the teacher experience, the researcher experience and in the ways UC contributes to the community of Canberra, the region, the nation and the world.

Bill believes education is the hope of the world. It has lifted millions out of poverty and been the most successful force for equality. It is an asset that furthers the career and life of the individual as much as it underpins the productive capacity of the economy.

The teaching of critical thinking that is core to university studies, Bill said, will help preserve our democracy.