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Government's higher education cuts to pay for flood package will stymie growth and quality

The IRU is disappointed with cuts impacting on the government's higher education agenda, which will hamper universities' capacity to realise increased participation in university study.

Professor Ian O'Connor, Chair of the IRU, says the abolition of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) in particular is deeply concerning.

"The ALTC has been a significant player promoting and recognising quality teaching and learning," Professor O'Connor said.

"It has attained significant traction in the sector, and has led to a focus on improving students' learning, and fostered the sharing of best practice and experience in teaching.

"The Bradley report clearly supported the ALTC, stating it should continue to play an important role in the further improvement of Australian higher education teaching and learning.

"We are also concerned with cuts to the Capital Development Pool (CDP), which funds important teaching, learning and student facilities. We seek reassurance that funding for this important area is given higher priority through changes to the remaining capital programs, in particular the Education Investment Fund.

"We understand the importance of finding funds to pay for rebuilding after the floods that have damaged significant parts of Queensland and other states.

"The issue is whether the impact of the cuts will harm the longer term productivity of universities and the quality of their graduates. High quality teaching and learning is essential to the Government's demand-driven funding arrangements." Professor O'Connor said.

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