

Media release

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Guaranteed student revenue an important first step for university sector

The Innovative Research Universities (IRU) group has responded to Education Minister Dan Tehan's statement today on financial support for the higher education sector:

In response to the Education Minister's statement, IRU Executive Director Conor King said:

"Australia needs robust a university sector to help get us out of the COVID-19 crisis.

"The Government's guarantee on domestic student funding is a major step towards protecting universities base capabilities and ensuring the education delivered to students over the rest of 2020 is of the quality we expect.

"But the Government package is only a partial answer. It still leaves universities facing a big hole in international student fee income, research funding and other commercial income.

"More still needs to be done to support international students through the crisis and to support universities while the borders are rightly closed to almost all travellers. It is a reality that the current university system is based on both Australian students and international students. Without the latter, course options will be fewer and we will need fewer staff.

"Universities have done a lot to adjust, including a rapid roll-out of online learning and providing a huge array of support packages for students.

"The good news is that, so far, Australian students have maintained their enrolments despite the challenging times."

IRU contacts

IRU Executive Director, Conor King **M:** 0434 601 691

IRU Marketing and Media Advisor, William Summers **T:** 03 9479 5312

About the IRU

The IRU is a network of seven comprehensive universities committed to inclusive excellence in teaching and research in Australia. Its members are Charles Darwin University, Flinders University, Griffith University, James Cook University, La Trobe University, Murdoch University and Western Sydney University.

iru.edu.au