

Question on notice no. 369

Portfolio question number: SQ26-000727

Budget estimates

Education and Employment Committee, Education Portfolio

Senator Maria Kovacic: asked the Australian Tertiary Education Commission on 5 June 2026—

Senator KOVACIC:I have some questions for the department about commencing-student caps. Are you able to table the 2026 allocations by university, along with a comparison to 2025 levels?

Prof. Glover: Yes, we would have that. I don't think we have it with us at the moment, but we can take it on notice.

Senator KOVACIC: Are you able to tell me-now if possible, otherwise on notice-which universities are required to have fewer commencing students in 2026 compared to 2025, as a result of these caps?

Prof. Glover: We could tell you that. By the way, they would have negotiated to take fewer students if there are universities in that category, in the comparison of 2025 to 2026, most likely because they have very substantial overenrolment, and that's a concern to them. There would be some universities that are below their maximum base grant amount who might have been hoping for increased enrolments that didn't occur necessarily for all universities. Overall, we're up about four per cent.

Senator KOVACIC: If you're able to give me the list of those-

Prof. Glover: I think we can table it.

.....

Mr Cook: In this case, these are the things we're required to do around a standard. I understand what you're saying to us. I'm saying that we couldn't give \$50 million to a university without some level of conditions around that funding.

Senator KOVACIC: I'm with you on ensuring that taxpayer funds are properly scrutinised and that we have appropriate mechanisms in place. That's where my issue is. Effectively, my view-and I put that to you-is that it probably falls below a minimum standard for the governance of an entity to, in effect, seek governance conditions through an email process for an entity that didn't yet exist. That's what I'm trying to say.

Mr Cook: Yes, in the sense that they were doing it on behalf of the department.

Senator KOVACIC: It hasn't been made public either. It's just through an email: this is what you have to do.

Mr Cook: I hear what you're saying.

Prof. Glover: We don't have the information you need at hand here today. We'll take on notice the comparison of 2025 to 2026 and provide it to you.

Answer —

Please see the attached PDF.

Standing Committees on Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2026-2027

Outcome: Agency: ATEC

Department of Education Question No. SQ26-000727

Senator Maria Kovacic on 05 June 2026, Proof Hansard page 34-36

ATEC | 2026 Allocations by University and 2025 Comparison

Question

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Answer

- In September 2025, Table A universities negotiated with the Interim Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC) to set commencing Equivalent Full-Time Student Load (EFTSL) limits for 2026. Table A universities agreed to total commencing EFTSL for 2026 of 243,719 (an increase of 9,524 or 4.1% from 2025 levels).
- In January 2026, Table A universities renegotiated with the Interim ATEC their commencing EFTSL limits for 2026 to reflect updated expectations of student demand. Based on this process, the agreed total commencing EFTSL for 2026 increased to 245,489 (an increase of 11,294 or 4.8% from 2025 levels).

- The full list of Table A universities' 2025 commencing EFTSL, their agreed commencing EFTSL limits for 2026, and the difference are noted below in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Commencing EFTSL limits for Table A universities

Commencing EFTSL	Commencing EFTSL in 2025 (per university submissions in September 2025)	Commencing EFTSL for 2026 agreed in January 2026	Change	Change (%)
Adelaide University	10,761	11,407	646	6.0%
Australian Catholic University	7,006	7,510	504	7.2%
Charles Darwin University	1,896	2,147	251	13.2%
Charles Sturt University	5,924	6,101	177	3.0%
CQUniversity	3,594	3,652	58	1.6%
Curtin University	8,480	8,878	398	4.7%
Deakin University	9,867	10,025	158	1.6%
Edith Cowan University	4,548	4,886	338	7.4%
Federation University Australia	2,726	3,106	380	13.9%
Flinders University	4,799	5,567	768	16.0%
Griffith University	9,102	9,789	687	7.5%
James Cook University	2,126	2,381	255	12.0%
La Trobe University	7,881	8,613	732	9.3%
Macquarie University	8,564	8,789	225	2.6%
Monash University	11,914	11,904	-10	-0.1%
Murdoch University	1,977	2,273	296	15.0%
Queensland University of Technology	10,592	11,128	536	5.1%
RMIT University	11,080	10,969	-111	-1.0%
Southern Cross University	3,121	3,402	281	9.0%
Swinburne University of Technology	4,550	4,878	328	7.2%
The Australian National University	2,773	2,925	152	5.5%
The University of Melbourne	8,742	9,180	438	5.0%
The University of New England	3,235	3,606	371	11.5%
The University of Newcastle	7,346	7,640	294	4.0%
The University of Queensland	8,638	8,946	308	3.6%
The University of Western Australia	4,624	4,942	318	6.9%
The University of Wollongong	5,342	5,449	107	2.0%
University of Canberra	2,413	2,638	225	9.3%
University of New South Wales	9,265	9,351	86	0.9%
University of Notre Dame Australia	2,983	3,237	254	8.5%
University of Southern Queensland	3,519	3,716	197	5.6%
University of Sydney	9,596	9,899	303	3.2%
University of Tasmania	6,577	6,838	261	4.0%
University of Technology Sydney	9,169	8,702	- 467	-5.1%
University of the Sunshine Coast	4,089	4,466	377	9.2%
Victoria University	4,806	5,142	336	7.0%
Western Sydney University	10,570	11,408	838	7.9%
Total	234,195	245,489	11,294	4.8%