

the council of Australia's university presidents

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AVCC concerned that legislation delays could be costly to Australia's higher education future

The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) President, Professor Deryck Schreuder said today that the AVCC welcomed the announcement that the Government is expected to introduce its higher education legislation later this week. The AVCC has been calling for the release of the legislation since May.

Professor Schreuder said, however, that the AVCC was concerned that delays in releasing the legislation has created difficulties for both universities and students.

“It is absolutely essential for the legislation to be passed this year to allow universities to have sufficient time to implement the necessary policy changes to accommodate the legislation,” Professor Schreuder said.

“Too often in the past, Governments have not given enough attention to the additional responsibilities placed on universities for the implementation of legislation within unrealistic time frames.

“And this can have a critical impact on students. Until we see the final legislation, we have a climate where students have insufficient information about their options and how they will be affected from 2005 under the proposed new changes.

“The prosperity of the university sector and the future of higher education within Australia depends on the sensible debate and amending if necessary of the Government's proposed legislation.

“The AVCC looks forward to sighting the legislation and is hopeful that the Government has taken on board the concerns we have expressed on behalf of the university sector so the legislation will be able to be passed quickly.

“Higher education is indeed at a crossroads,” Professor Schreuder said.

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