



Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee
the council of Australia's university presidents

Media Release

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Federal Budget 2006-07: AVCC response

The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) welcomes a number of initiatives announced today in the 2006-2007 Budget.

AVCC President Professor Gerard Sutton said that of the new initiatives, the most significant for the sector was the Capital Development Pool funding, and the increase in the cap for FEE-HELP students.

"The \$95.5m over four years is a 50 % increase in base funding for the Capital Development Pool. This will provide universities with funds to undertake new infrastructure projects. There is also additional capital funding for the Australian National University," Professor Sutton said.

"The long-held AVCC position in relation to FEE-HELP has been recognised in this Budget: the cap for all students will be increased to \$80,000 (from \$50,950) and the cap for students in medicine, vet science and dentistry will be increased to \$100,000.

"In addition, the \$10 million over four years in support for small businesses to establish student services for our regional campuses is welcomed", he said.

"There is a need for Government to substantially increase research funding before any meaningful change is made to the current research funding allocation process.

"Measures to monitor research quality and impact are high on the current agenda for universities and Government. It is therefore disappointing to note that there is no additional funding provided to enable universities to implement the outcome of any research assessment process," Professor Sutton said.

The AVCC also notes the recent announcements made in relation to the 2006-07 Budget:

- Capital funding of \$18 million to Deakin University for its new medical school in Geelong and, \$5 million for Monash University's medical school in Gippsland (subject to matching commitments by the Victorian Government);
- \$12 million of capital pool funding for a global centre of excellence in transnational crime prevention for the University of Wollongong; and
- \$4.5 million towards the cost of building Bond University's medical school.

"In addition, AVCC notes the already announced new funding of almost \$220 million over four years to support new and existing medical, nursing and clinical support places," Professor Sutton said.

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