



Australian Government
Department of Education

Our Ref MC22-003704

Dr Hilary Yerbury
Education Convenor
Graduate Women-NSW
LG Floor, 280 Pitt Street
Sydney NSW 2000
hyerbury@tpg.com.au

Dear Dr Yerbury

Thank you for your email of 20 July 2022 to the Hon Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education, regarding post-school education opportunities for women and the impact of the student contribution increases in humanities and social sciences subjects on female students. The Minister has asked me to reply on his behalf.

I acknowledge that the student contribution changes implemented as part of the previous Government's Job-ready Graduates package of reforms increased the cost for students studying humanities and social science subjects. Female students account for a greater proportion of the students studying these units resulting in a greater impact being felt by female students. Equitable access to higher education is a priority for the Government.

Opportunities for women across all facets of the higher education system, including the impact of current policy settings, is one of the areas the Australian Universities Accord (the Accord) will focus on. This process will look at ways the Government, working together with universities, business, students and unions, can improve opportunity for all Australians. It will consider questions around funding and affordability, transparency, regulation and improving opportunity for disadvantaged cohorts. All Australians will have the opportunity to engage with the Accord process, and I encourage Graduate-Women NSW to take part. Further information regarding the Accord, including how to participate in consultation processes, will be announced in the coming months.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Chipperfield".

Kate Chipperfield
Assistant Secretary
Funding and Students Branch
8 August 2022