

Media Release

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Minister's assurance on continuing collaboration welcomed

The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) held its Plenary meeting in Sydney today, 9 November 2004.

"The AVCC was fortunate enough to be joined at today's meeting by the Minister, Dr Brendan Nelson and senior members of his staff, and the new Secretary for Education, Science and Training, Ms Lisa Paul," Professor Yerbury said.

"The Vice-Chancellors had a positive engagement with the Minister on a number of issues that have been of outstanding concern to both the AVCC and the Government.

"Dr Nelson was forthright in his discussions with the group and indicated his willingness to continue to work collaboratively with Vice-Chancellors to progress the current higher education agenda," Professor Yerbury said.

The matters raised by the Minister and discussed with the Plenary included:

- indexation;
- review of National Protocols;
- voluntary student associations and funding for core student services;
- credit transfer systems between VET and Higher Education; and
- workplace relations issues.

"The Minister has indicated his willingness to engage in consultation on these issues. In some instances, the process will be for discussion papers to be prepared, inviting sector and community input prior to consultation and formal decisions.

"The Vice-Chancellors welcomed this continuation of a collegiate approach, and reinforced their commitment to working effectively with the Government to progressing issues associated with the higher education sector, while continuing to argue strongly for the interests of universities and their students.

"While we understand that we will not always agree or achieve desired outcomes on the part of the sector or the Government, we are pleased that the Minister has reinforced his interest in and support for the sector," Professor Yerbury said.

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