

Australian Council of Social Service

10 September 2020

Committee Secretary
Senate Education and Employment Committees
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Via email: eec.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary,

Higher Education Support Amendment (Job-Ready Graduates and Supporting Regional and Remote Students) Bill 2020

The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) is a national advocate for action to reduce poverty and inequality and the peak body for the community services sector in Australia. Our vision is for a fair, inclusive and sustainable Australia where all individuals and communities can participate in and benefit from social and economic life. ACOSS welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Committee in this important area.

Noting the short timeframes for making submissions to this inquiry, ACOSS will limit its submission to the issues affecting the community sector, rather than the broader equity issues associated with the bill.

ACOSS supports the decision of the Federal Government in the bill to create the new disciplines of professional pathway social work and professional pathway psychology in Commonwealth Grant Scheme funding. ACOSS recommends that a range of degrees are captured in these professional pathways, including:

- Bachelor of Community Services
- Bachelor of Community Welfare
- Bachelor of Social Welfare
- Bachelor of Human Services
- Bachelor of Child and Family Studies
- Bachelor of Social Science
- Bachelor of Youth Work
- Bachelor of Counselling
- Bachelor of Community Development
- Bachelor of Disability

It is essential that these degrees are included in the social work and/or psychology professional pathway, so that a lower cost pathway to completing these qualifications is established in the new regime. This will make it cheaper for students to study key qualifications in these areas of future job demand, and assist the community services sector to address its attraction and retention challenges.

If the committee has any questions regarding this submission, the ACOSS contact person is Senior Advisor Dr John Mikelsons, on (02) 9310 6212 or john@acoss.org.au .

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Goldie'.

Dr Cassandra Goldie
CEO, ACOSS