



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND YOUTH AFFAIRS

MICHAEL PETTERSSON MLA (CHAIR), ELIZABETH KICKERT MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), MARK PARTON MLA

Inquiry into referred 2018–19 Annual and Financial Reports

QUESTION ON NOTICE

BEC CODY: To ask the University of Canberra

Ref: Annual Report

In relation to: Competitive Environment

What is the risk to the Uni of the proposed expansion of competitors, i.e. UNSW, in the ACT and how have these been planned for?

Response

The University of Canberra operates in an increasingly competitive market. The Canberra and region market is very attractive to higher education providers, given our high relative incomes, high education attainment, and also the emphasis and support that public and private sector employers place on the professional development of their staff.

We understand the ACT Government is negotiating with the University of New South Wales on the development of a new campus in City East, on and adjacent the current Reid site of the Canberra Institute of Technology. Beyond the publicly available information, the University of Canberra is not privy to any detail on the intended scale, student and course focus, or timelines and process to establish the new campus; and has not been consulted on possible impact as part of the Government's negotiations.

The University's best approach in a competitive and constantly changing market is to focus on our strengths and be the best we can be – that is, making sure our education products and services are highly aligned to the needs and aspirations of prospective students, employers and industry sectors. Similarly, we seek to deliver research and innovation outcomes that are aligned to the needs and issues of the communities we are part of. Our track record as a University in providing skills to a range of critical industry sectors in Canberra is exemplary. Our continuous rise in various international University rankings programs is also testament to the work that has occurred at UC for some years, particularly around our research performance.

It is, however, important to understand that with a population less than that of Tasmania which is served by just one university, there are now five providers competing in this small ACT and regional market. It is a very challenging competitive environment.

Going forward, the strong place-based connection the University has to Canberra and its region will be very much part of the way we do business, how we engage with our partners and stakeholders, and how we provide value and benefit to the community.

We are the only University established under an Act of the ACT Legislative Assembly and we anticipate that a continuing close and productive working relationship with the ACT Government will help secure our long-term viability and success. We look forward to deepening this relationship in years to come.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs

Signature: 

Date: 5/02/2020

By the [name/title of Vice Chancellor]
Belinda Robinson