



Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2024–2025

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

Addressed to: The Hon Bill Shorten, Vice-Chancellor and Mr Geoff Drummond, Interim Chief Operating Officer

In relation to: Student accommodation

Hearing: 13 November 2025

Uncorrected Proof Transcript pp 43-44

Transcript provided: 20 November 2025

Answer Due: 26 November 2025

(UPT p 43)

Mr Drummond: It would. There would also be avenues by which students can raise it directly with the university and to the accommodation team.

MISS NUTTALL: Forgive me for—possibly you can tell me to, “Google it, mate,” but what does that look like for a student? Like, do they just hop online?

Mr Drummond: It would be a portal. I mean, we have got our representatives which are visible and known and contact details are available. But perhaps I need to take that on notice just to make sure I am not mistaken in any way. But there would be a portal by which they would be able to report.

MISS NUTTALL: Beautiful.

(UPT p 44)

MISS NUTTALL: Got you. And actually just on that, do you have any oversight on standardising pricing for student accommodation, like, across rooms? Are there any sort of mechanisms essentially to—you know, obviously we have got the Residential Tenancies Act which cap rent increases per year. Is the same kind of thing happening in student accommodation?

Mr Drummond: I mean I am not going to call it market-dependent, but it does depend upon the type of accommodation that is offered. Probably it is standard. It is its age, the facilities that are available. There are rental affordability schemes that we are subject to that provide effectively a subsidy on the accommodation. But again, I will take it on notice as to the applicability of the Tenancy Act to student accommodation.

MISS NUTTALL: Thank you.

Mr Shorten: A couple of qualitative sort of data points. So we provide an accommodation guarantee for all our first year students. We have approximately two and a half thousand beds available on campus and in Belconnen. Our most popular options are in our single room lodges on campus in Belconnen and our one- to two-bedroom suites on campus. I do not have all of our room rates, but our room rates start as low as 210, and that is inclusive of utilities, for multi-share apartments. The rate increases for next year are 0.36 per cent, so 0.36, to 0.91. So that is not bad. Our conversion rate as of the end of October, so last month—that is, current occupant renewal—is at 78 per cent. So that is the highest conversion rate we have had in five years.

MISS NUTTALL: Okay, that is encouraging to hear. I am just checking my notes. Yes, I have heard rumblings that accessible rooms cost more than other rooms. Can you confirm whether that is the case?

Mr Shorten: I do not know if that is the case, but we can find out.

MISS NUTTALL: If that is all right, that would be really great.

Vice-Chancellor, Bill Shorten: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- Are the student's occupying the University's student accommodation subject to the ACT RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES ACT 1997?
 - Yes -There was an amendment to the RTA in 2020 which incorporated occupancy agreements into the RTA. We have been compliant since 2020, and our Occupancy Agreement is in line with the RTA.
- Is there a difference in the rate charged for our disability accessible accommodation?
 - No, we charge the same rate per room type, even though the room is slightly bigger. If we must make additional adaptations to a room, these costs are not passed onto the resident.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:



Date: 5 March 2026

By the Vice Chancellor – Professor the Honourable Bill Shorten, University of Canberra