

Tabled, by leave,
Mr Graham
Clerk of the Parliaments
28/9/24

UNIVERSITIES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Need: Why is the policy needed based on factual evidence and stakeholder input?

The 10 NSW public universities (Charles Sturt University, Macquarie University, University of Newcastle, University of Sydney, University of New South Wales, Southern Cross University, University of Technology Sydney, University of Wollongong, Western Sydney University and University of New England) requested minor variations to their acts in regard to land transactions and to generally update and modernise the lands provisions. Five universities requested amendments to allow sub-delegation by their respective vice-chancellors of certain powers of their governing bodies, reflecting the sub-delegation provision already in the acts of the five remaining universities.

Objectives: What is the policy's objective couched in terms of the public interest?

The bill lessens regulation and reduces the administrative burden on the public universities and the Minister, while maintaining oversight and accountability for the sale of university land obtained from the State at nominal or less than market value.

Options: What alternative policies and mechanisms were considered in advance of the bill?

None. The requirements that are being updated and removed rest solely within the 10 NSW public university acts. Legislative amendment is the only way to remove or modify these provisions.

Analysis: What were the pros/cons and benefits/costs of each option considered?

The only other option was to do nothing. The NSW Department of Education has worked closely with the public universities to develop straightforward changes which reduce administrative burden, maintain appropriate oversight, improve clarity and make the lands provisions in the university acts more readily understandable to a general reader.

Pathway: What are the timetable and steps for the policy's rollout and who will administer it?

The amendments will be implemented on commencement by the NSW Department of Education and the 10 NSW public universities.

Consultation: Were the views of affected stakeholders sought and considered in making the policy?

The Bill was developed in an iterative process, over the course of several years, between the NSW Department of Education and the 10 NSW public universities. All the affected universities support the Bill and have actively sought these changes.