

Media release

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IRU statement on status of Year 12

Year 12 goes ahead – and so will 2021 university entry, says IRU

The Innovative Research Universities (IRU) group has released a statement regarding the status of Year 12 high school students, whose study has been interrupted by the Coronavirus crisis (COVID-19).

The IRU supports the commitment of State and Territory Governments to pursuing Year 12 assessments in 2020:

“The IRU applauds the work of State and Territory Governments to keep Year 12 on track.

The IRU has [long argued](#) that all Australians need to complete school and then progress to tertiary education, whether in higher education or vocational education.

Australia will need well-educated and skilled people more than ever as we recover from the health and economic beating of COVID-19.

The focus at the end of schooling should be to ensure each person finds their way to the next course. To do that well we need good information [about the education achievement of each person](#). A student’s relative ranking to the next person is a secondary consideration.

Each State and Territory has its distinct way to assess Year 11 and Year 12 schoolwork. There is no one right way. This gives a lot of scope to put in place assessments suited to the COVID-19 circumstances.

We will learn that the precision of highly wrought systems is not necessary to achieving the key task, which is to educate each person to their best potential and provide a statement that this has been done, indicating the broad level of achievement.

Despite many confusing statements, the ATAR comes after the Year 12 assessment process. It ranks students by their assessed outcomes, however they are determined.

Some courses cannot admit all who are capable of doing them. The ATAR is an effective means to select among those who are suitable when only some can be successful.

Many if not most university courses consider applicants based on whether they are likely to be capable of completing the course. Most who can demonstrate that they are capable are offered a place, with over half in recent years receiving an offer for their preferred course.

IRU members will work to ensure the 2021 matching of applicant to course is as smooth as possible, as all tertiary providers help each applicant finds a suitable course for their needs at university, TAFE or other tertiary provider.”

The IRU has previously outlined its views on the transition from school to universities in its 2018 paper, [Towards a Tertiary Future](#).

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About the IRU

The IRU is a network of seven comprehensive universities committed to inclusive excellence in teaching and research in Australia. Its members are Charles Darwin University, Flinders University, Griffith University, James Cook University, La Trobe University, Murdoch University and Western Sydney University.