In general terms, the University endorses the comments made by Chancellors and Universities Australia. In particular, the University endorses the following points:

- members of governing bodies of universities should not be subject to more prescriptive requirements than apply to directors of bodies governed by Corporation laws
- it is unwise to apply a “one size fits all” governance model (which extends into areas of management), particularly when stated object of the Government is to promote diversity
- more prescriptive and detailed protocols should be avoided when the added costs of compliance and reporting risk being inconsistent with the potential benefits.

Griffith University had already moved significantly in the direction enunciated by the Protocols well before the Protocols were published. This move had occurred in the context of the Hoare Report of the mid-1990s and the emergence of stronger governance principles arising from the private sector. The only major area in which the Protocols have had a direct impact on the University has been the requirement, now enshrined in legislation, to limit the size of Council to 22 members.

The University is very concerned that the cumulative impact of the various proposals in the Issues Paper would add considerably to the regulation of the sector, to an extent which does not even apply to the private sector through the Corporation laws. Furthermore, in several places, the Issues Paper clearly confuses the respective roles of the Council and the Vice Chancellor.

It is noted that the Issues Paper is quite different from the 13 points raised by the Minister as possible areas for improvement in University governance. There are at least some items on the Minister’s list with which the University would not disagree. There may be ways in which some of these proposals could be adopted by universities without including them in the Protocols. This is perhaps worth exploring.

July 2007