



**Child &
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STATE MEMBER
ORGANISATIONS

- Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (NSW)
- Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare (Victoria)
- Child & Family Focus South Australia (CAFFSA)
- Child and Family Alliance WA (CAFAWA)
- Families and Children Tasmania (FACT)
- PeakCare Qld
- NTCOSS

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17 August 2020

**Re: Job-ready Graduates Package - draft legislation
consultation**

We thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on behalf of the Child and Family Welfare Association of Australia (CAFWAA) regarding the Higher Education Support Amendment (Job-ready Graduates and Supporting Regional and Remote Students) Bill 2020. CAFWAA is the national peak for child and family welfare in Australia and the CAFWAA Board comprises representatives from all Australian states and territories, as well specific representation from youth and carer organisations.

In the first instance we note our concern about the lack of notice due to limited promotion of this consultation across our sector. The release of the consultation paper was only brought to the attention of CAFWAA today, despite our inclusion on several of the Department's mailing lists. The relatively short time frame for submission also creates some challenges given the complexity of the proposed changes covering a multiplicity of measures that would create significant changes to our tertiary education sector.

In addition, such changes would undoubtedly have impacts on many sectors, such as our own. Our sector depends on the education of professionally qualified graduates to maintain quality service provision for children and families experiencing vulnerability across the country.

The CAFWAA Board recently noted its concerns that some of the proposed legislative changes would potentially cause the loss of a whole cohort of social workers. The increasing trend for requiring relevant university qualifications in the community services sector suggests we need an increase rather than a decrease in the number of appropriately qualified graduates. The CAFWAA Board also noted that Humanities and Social Science degrees are often chosen by young people leaving state care who are already greatly disadvantaged in terms of gaining access to higher education.

CAFWAA believes elements of the proposed changes could be extremely detrimental to our sector and those we serve. We would appreciate extended time to consider the proposed changes and respond accordingly.

Yours sincerely


Tricia Murray,
CAFWAA Chairperson