

AHEIA Media Release - 20 February 2020

Australian universities undertaking workplace reform

The Australian Higher Education Industrial Association has released its *Transforming the Higher Education Workforce Report* that examines workplace reform in universities over the past four years. The report, prepared by PwC Australia, follows a survey of AHEIA member universities late last year and interviews with key university personnel.

“One of the core findings of the report is that change is now very much a constant within our universities, which are undertaking major transformative projects in seeking to meet increasing student expectations and changing needs” said AHEIA Executive Director, Stuart Andrews. *“The report also recognises a positive cultural shift towards embracing change, and an increased focus by universities on communication and engagement with staff, establishment of change management methodologies, and leadership development. At the same time, however, the report has found that a change-resistant culture still exists to some degree within our universities. Other major obstacles that stand in the way of successful change projects relate to government funding and policy changes, the inflexible nature of some enterprise agreements, and workforce and leadership capability.”*

Ben Neal, Lead Partner, PwC People and Organisation, said: *“Significant progress has been made by universities in transforming their workforces since AHEIA released the Australian Higher Education Workforce of the Future Report in 2016. While there's still plenty of work to be done to address both the internal and external factors affecting the sector, the cultural shift necessary to embrace the scale of change required is well underway. This shift has enabled universities to design and implement practical, pragmatic initiatives with tangible benefits for workforce capability, structure and engagement. We hope all universities are encouraged to continue their transformation efforts and work to drive collaboration across the sector.”*