

Portfolio Committee No. 3 – Education

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio area

Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education

29 August 2025

Answers to questions taken on notice by
Professor Tyrone Carlin
Vice-Chancellor and President
Southern Cross University

p. 74	The Hon. WES FANG: Professor Carlin, why do some of your academics working in smaller units find themselves being required to work more hours than some of those working in the larger units? Why are they not paid for the extra time that they are required to do? TYRONE CARLIN: All of our academics have workloads allocated to them in accordance with the academic workload framework and the enterprise agreement, and I'm not aware of instances where that does not hold true. The Hon. WES FANG: Does that mean that hasn't been raised with you? TYRONE CARLIN: We have a mechanism that is defined in our enterprise agreement, which centres around the operation of something that we call the academic workload committee. That committee naturally traverses a whole series of things, and it is comprised of representatives of the leadership team of the university, as well as staff who are nominated to be part of it. They traverse lots of issues. There is a particular process defined under the enterprise agreement for the use of that committee and other mechanisms to, in effect, formally notify us of a concern about the sort of matter that you've adverted to. I'm not aware that through that committee structure, at least to my recent recollection—and I'm very happy to take this on notice and confirm to you—that I have seen a matter formally raised, pursuant to that defined process.
	No complaints have been received via the academic workload committee, per my remarks during the hearing.
p. 83	The CHAIR: We have two minutes for crossbench and two minutes for the Opposition, and then we will go to Government questions. I have one for all of you. We know there's an enormous and growing mental health crisis, and it's often crashing down on young people of university age. We also know that a lot of universities are going through extremely turbulent job cuts and restructures, which puts a huge psychological strain on staff as well. In that context, what are you each doing to monitor and identify deaths on campus and/or suicides amongst staff and student cohorts? Can I start perhaps with you, Professor Carlin? TYRONE CARLIN: Sorry, Chair, was your question deaths on campus? The CHAIR: Deaths and suicides amongst staff and student cohorts—is it something that you monitor? TYRONE CARLIN: It's absolutely something that we would monitor for within our critical risk reporting framework. I am not aware of any such instances. There have been instances where students have contacted us and expressed

	an intention to self-harm. We have a system in place across the university that is designed to capture, coordinate, report on and track our responses to that. We've invested quite considerably in enhancing that system and making sure that where there are critical incidents, they are visible to relevant leaders within the institution very quickly. In relation to the suicide, I will take that on notice. I think the broad answer to your question, from the point of view of monitoring for it, is of course we do. Do we have systems in place to help us to be able to keep line of sight to those very tragic circumstances? Indeed.
	Southern Cross University has invested heavily in systems for reporting and monitoring of critical incidents involving students, staff or visitors to our campuses, as well for tracking the University's response to such incidents. Part of that initial response is to ensure that relevant leaders within the institution are notified so that appropriate and timely action can be taken. This is especially important in respect of the support – be it academic, pastoral, financial or otherwise – that we would offer to affected students, staff, and their families.