Australian Council of Deans of Science

Topics of current interest 2026 #5

Covering (mostly) the period September to October 2026

The following are recent articles and reports that may be of interest to Deans of Science.
Past issues of these 'Topics of Current Interest' are on the ACDS website under Engagement.

1. Decline in domestic HDR students 2015-2024

https://franklarkins.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/research-students-2015-to-2024.docx

Frank Larkins, 28 August 2026

- Analysis shows an overall decline in Australian domestic HDR students over 10 years. This is offset somewhat by a rise in international HDR students, but it varies by university.

2. Senate report on the Accord Bill

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Education_and_Employment/OpeningDoors/Report

The Senate, 3 September 2026

- The Accord bill has now been passed, and this report is a useful summary of the submissions, public hearings and other material.

3. 2026 Update to the ARC's persistent identifier (PID) Action Plan

https://www.arc.gov.au/news-and-publications/media/2026-update-arcs-pid-action-plan

Australian Research Council, 3 September 2026

- All you need to know about the use of ORCID, DOI, ROR and RAiD in ARC grant applications.

4. NSW inquiry into university governance

https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/parliamentary-business/committees/inquiry-details?committeeInquiryId=3134

NSW Parliament, 21 September 2026

- Contains strong recommendations for improving the governance of universities.

5. 2026 intergenerational report

https://treasury.gov.au/publication/2026-intergenerational-report

The Treasury, 21 September 2026

- Five major transformations will have profound implications for our economy and society.

6. STEM engagement mapping

https://www.arose.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/AROSE-STEM-Ecosystem-Mapping-1.pdf

Australian Remote Operations for Space and Earth (AROSE), 22 September 2026

- A useful mapping of STEM engagement activities across all levels of education. Are they perhaps too fragmented and focussed on people already interested in science?

7. National Research Infrastructure Roadmap draft

https://www.education.gov.au/national-research-infrastructure/resources/2026-nri-roadmap-exposure-draft

Department of Education, 28 September 2026

- Explores strategies for coordinating and investing in national research infrastructure.

8. Announcement of new ARC scheme - Explore

https://www.arc.gov.au/news-and-publications/media/advance-information-about-explore-grant-opportunity-2028

Australian Research Council, 30 September 2026

- Aims to support innovative and radically new research, fund ECR salaried Chief Investigators, and explore 'weighted randomisation' (lottery) assessment.

9. Consultation on ATEC strategic priorities 2027-28

https://www.atec.gov.au/consultations/have-your-say-statement-strategic-priorities

Australian Tertiary Education Commission, 2 October 2026

- Adds Global Engagement, Collaboration, Student Experience & Safety to existing priorities.

10. Jobs and Skills Report 2026

https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/publications/jobs-and-skills-report-2026

Jobs and Skills Australia, 12 October 2026

- Lots of interesting statistics. Figure 24 shows a large expected increase in school leavers.

11. Value for money

https://sciencemeetsbusiness.com.au/scientists-could-do-better-at-showing-we-offer-value-for-money/

Sven Rogge, Dean of Science, UNSW, 12 October 2026

- Argues for the importance of always thinking about the impact of our scientific research.

12. Longitudinal graduate outcomes survey

https://www.qilt.edu.au/surveys/graduate-outcomes-survey---longitudinal-(gos-l)

Quality Indicators for Teaching and Learning (QILT), October 2026

- Full-time employment rate is more than 90% for all graduates after 3 years.

13. Science misinformation white paper

https://www.smc.org.au/sms-whitepaper

Australian Science Media Centre, October 2026

- A report looking at the growing issue of science misinformation in Australia.

14. ATEC consultation on costing and pricing of university education

https://www.atec.gov.au/news/australian-tertiary-education-commission-opens-consultation-university-costing-and-pricing-framework

Australian Tertiary Education Commission (ATEC), 29 October 2026

- A new framework is proposed for consultation.

15. ACDS communiqué on AI in university science leadership

https://www.acds.edu.au/rountable-results-ai-in-university-science/

ACDS, 16 October 2026

For our recent submissions to government and other news from the ACDS see:
https://www.acds.edu.au/category/news/

For the ACDS book club: 😊

- *Andy Weir, 2021, "Project Hail Mary", Penguin*.
  Many of you will have seen the film, but I finally got around to reading the book. It is chock-full of interesting science. Who knew that $e^{2\pi i}$ could be such a good punchline for a joke?

Please let me know if you have any recent science-related books that you would like to recommend, or any news articles that you would like me to highlight.

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