EXPLANATORY STATEMENT
Proclamation

Issued by the Authority of the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research

Subject: Higher Education Support Amendment (Streamlining and Other Measures) Act 2012
Proclamation

The Higher Education Support Amendment (Streamlining and Other Measures) Act 2012 (the Act) amends the Higher Education Support Act 2003 to position the Government to deliver timely improvements to its Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) schemes, particularly VET FEE-HELP. The amendments will enable the Government to act on the recommendations arising from the Post Implementation Review of the VET FEE-HELP Scheme Final Report September 2011 and its commitments under the April 2012 COAG National Partnership Agreement on Skills Reform, particularly the redesign of VET FEE-HELP.

The purpose of the amendments is to strengthen the integrity and quality framework underpinning the HELP schemes, improve information sharing and transparency with the national education regulators, improve arrangements for the early identification of low quality providers, and position the Government to better manage risk to students and public monies.

Items 2, 4 and 5 of the table in subsection 2(1) of the Act provide that Schedules 1, 3 and 4 to the Act shall commence on a day to be fixed by Proclamation or if any of the provision(s) do not commence within the period of six months beginning on the day the Act receives the Royal Assent, they commence on the day after the end of that period.

The purpose of the proposed Proclamation is to fix 1 January 2013 as the day on which Schedules 1, 3 and 4 to the Act commences.

Schedule 2, which relates to the amendment of approvals and revocation of approvals under the Higher Education Support Act 2003, commenced on the date of Royal Assent.

Schedule 3A, which relates to a freeze of indexation on the Student Start-up Scholarship under the Social Security Act 1991, commenced on the date of Royal Assent.

The proposed Proclamation would be a legislative instrument for the purposes of the Legislative Instruments Act 2003.

As this Proclamation only provides commencement for Schedules 1, 3 and 4 of the Act, consultation was not required.

The Minute recommends that the Proclamation be made in the form proposed.

Authority: Items 2, 4 and 5 of table in subsection 2(1) of the Higher Education Support Amendment (Streamlining and Other Measures) Act 2012