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Go8 supports stronger university governance and action against racism

The Group of Eight (Go8) supports the Australian Government's ambition to strengthen governance standards across the university sector and take action against racism.

Go8 Chief Executive Vicki Thomson said Australia's leading research-intensive universities recognise their responsibility to maintain public trust and confidence while fostering safe, inclusive and respectful campus environments.

"Go8 universities unreservedly reject antisemitism, racism towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Islamophobia and all other forms of racism or religious intolerance. There is no place for this behaviour in Australian society, and no place for it on our campuses."

Ms Thomson said the Go8 is already undertaking significant work that aligns with the Government's new anti-racism standard.

"Earlier this year, the Expert Advisory Committee to Combat Antisemitism (EACCA) delivered its report to the Go8 Board, providing a practical framework to strengthen university responses to antisemitism and improve consistency, transparency and accountability across our institutions."

The Committee noted that while its remit was antisemitism, its recommendations were designed to contribute to stronger standards in addressing a broader range of discriminatory behaviours and intolerance.

"The Go8 Board is now considering the EACCA report and is committed to continuing to strengthen consistency, accountability and transparency across our member universities."

Ms Thomson said the Go8 also supports efforts to strengthen university governance.

"Good governance is never set and forget. Universities must continue to evolve to meet changing expectations and maintain public confidence. As Australia's leading research-intensive universities, we support measures that strengthen governance and help ensure our campuses are safe and respectful places for all."

"The choice is not between safety and academic freedom. Universities must deliver both. We must be places where difficult ideas can be tested and debated rigorously, while racism, intimidation and discrimination are never tolerated."

"The Go8 looks forward to working constructively with the Australian Government and TEQSA to implement these reforms in a way that strengthens public confidence, protects academic freedom and reinforces Australia's global reputation for university excellence."

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