

Shot in arm for study hubs

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Money has been set aside to support more students at regional study hubs despite a nationwide funding freeze on tertiary education.

The Federal Government has not revealed how hubs can access the \$14 million made available in the 2018 Budget. Geraldton Universities Centre believes the money will provide 185 additional places for students in regional areas from January 1, 2019.

The Government has previously stated it will not increase the money given to universities to support students in bachelor courses this year or next year, even if more students apply to study.

Since the December announcement, the Government has breached its two-year freeze by handing out \$123 million to multiple universities.

Geraldton Universities Centre board chairman Steve Douglas said static funding would likely cap the amount of people who could study. He said he was confident the centre's partners would continue to deliver courses through the centre, but was concerned about other universities withdrawing from regional study hubs. He welcomed the funding news. "These additional funded places will provide the confidence that university partners need to deliver in the regions, thereby ensuring the sustainability of regional study hubs which provide vitally important university access to regional communities," Mr Douglas said.

Despite the \$14 million, he said he would still like study hubs to be spared from the funding freeze.

He said he was grateful for Federal Member for Durack Melissa Price, who had campaigned for GUC exemption. Regional study hubs are based on Geraldton's model of partnering with universities to deliver courses.



Steve Douglas has welcomed the funding of additional regionally based university places.