

1 February 2022

Ms Anna Schneider Rumble
Director
Advice and Investment Branch
The Treasury
Langton Crescent
PARKS ACT 2600

via email: FASStandards@treasury.gov.au

Dear Ms Schneider Rumble

Education Standards for Financial Advisers

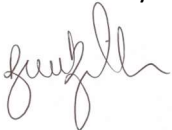
We welcome the opportunity to comment on the Treasury's discussion paper *Education Standards for Financial Advisers*. We are supportive of education standards for advisors which will ensure consumers have access to the best possible financial advice services, and small business financial advisers operate to the highest possible standards. The financial advice sector has similarly embraced the mandated education reforms to transform advisers into recognised professionals.

Stakeholders have identified a reduction in adviser numbers and higher advice costs as unintended consequences of the educational standards reforms. The following changes could lower the cost of advice, increase adviser numbers, while preserving attainment of professional recognition:

1. Advisers with long term experience and unblemished compliance records should be granted a further unit of credit towards their qualifications. This would reduce costs, study loads and provide recognition, whilst maintaining the integrity of the reforms.
2. Professional year requirements should be reviewed and adjusted to promote new entrants and to encourage small businesses to train advisers. Recognition for experience, skills and formal qualifications is critical in developing tailored, flexible, targeted and financially viable training. Right-sizing adviser training could be assisted by targeted government assistance to mitigate the professional year costs borne by small advice practices and licensees.
3. The Treasury should continue to provide oversight of education standards until the completion of the FASEA mandated education requirements in January 2026. This will facilitate developing and executing a transition of responsibilities to professional associations, education providers and licensees.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Mr David Meakin on 02 5114 6106 or at david.meakin@asbfeo.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



The Hon. Bruce Billson
Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman