

# Foreword

The 1990s were a period when fundamental changes reshaped the higher education system in Australia, as they did in many other nations. This report chronicles those changes, including developments in government policy, the impact on students, the strategic directions taken by universities and their operation and governance. It builds on the first National Report on Higher Education in Australia published in 1993 that described the evolution of the higher education system in Australia up until the end of the 1980s.

The report was a team effort involving many people from within the Department of Education, Science and Training. Much of the data used in the report was drawn from statistical collections within the department. The report is also enriched by contributions made by people with first-hand experience of the university system. Boxes are used throughout the report to provide the reader with insights into the challenges and opportunities presented by the changes that were the mark of the 1990s. The contributions from outside the department broaden the perspective of the report considerably.

The Department acknowledges the contributions made by the following people: Professor Grant Harman, Professor Rob Webb, Professor Lauchlan Chipman, Professor Don Aitkin, Professor Deane Terrell, Professor Paul Ramsden, Professor Craig McInnis, Professor Ann Jervie Sefton, Professor Phil Candy, Professor John Dearn, Professor Carrick Martin, Professor Peter Berquist, Mr Mark Skeats, Professor Robert Clark, Mr John O'Callaghan, Professor Frank Larkins, Professor Chris Brink, Mr Rex Hunter, Dr Steve Garlick, Mr Tony Pollock, Mr David Hatherley, Professor Peter Swannell, Professor Don McNicol, Ms Belinda Webster, Dr Ian Barnard, Professor Andrew Glenn, Professor Peter Baverstock and Ms Linda Butler.

The report is intended to provide background material on the transformation of the higher education system over the past decade, both for the general public and those involved with the higher education community. Chapter one provides an overview of those changes and the following chapters explore these changes in more detail and from different perspectives. The report is essentially an historical overview and it should provide a useful context for any discussion on the nature of universities in Australia and the role of government in higher education.

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