

National Tertiary Education Industry Union

**An NTEU Response
to**

Learning for Life

**Policy Discussion Paper of the Review of
Higher Education Financing and Policy**

December 1997

INDEX

1. INTRODUCTION

Funding Cuts
Indexation of Operating Grants and Salary Supplementation
Up-front Fees
HECS Changes
Disregard for the Concerns of University Staff

2. STUDENT-CENTRED FUNDING

3. DEREGULATION AND NATIONAL COMPETITION POLICY

Deregulation
Fees and Regulation
Competition Policy
Infrastructure Charges

4. RESEARCH

5. ACHIEVING AND ENSURING QUALITY

6. INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

Indigenous Australians' Participation in Higher Education
Indigenous Staff in Australian Higher Education

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Committee's Discussion Paper is disappointing in several important respects. It makes a number of major assumptions about facts in the first instance, and desirable policy directions in the second. It fails both to present factual evidence for many of its claims, and also to examine a sufficiently broad range of policy options. It does not recognise, let alone engage with, ideas contrary to its chosen ideological framework.

Its ill-founded and unsupported assumptions include the assertions that Australian higher education is ill-equipped and comparatively unprepared for the changes required to enter the twenty-first century, and that the system lacks incentives and expertise in the areas of financial and asset management. The Committee's policy perspective fails to encompass the possibility that increased public investment, and a more vigorous role for Government in planning and extending the system, are required in higher education. It fails also to enmesh in its analysis an understanding of the cultural and social role played by higher education, and to appreciate the close relationship between the teaching and research functions of universities.

The Discussion Paper does not review the fundamental change in policy direction imposed on higher education by the current Government, including the cuts to university operating grants, the refusal to fund long-overdue salary increases for university staff, and, most crucially, the new policy on fees for Australian undergraduate students. Instead, it proposes further sweeping and radical change without providing any real rationale. It assumes the inevitability, but nevertheless ignores the implications, of a series of other more general aspects of the policy context including the application of National Competition Policy to higher education and the entry of foreign providers into the Australian market.

Finally, in its embrace of an approach to higher education policy based squarely on the application of market principles, the Committee is narrowly ideological. Its proposals for "student-centred" or voucher funding, accompanied by unregulated tuition fees, are seriously inequitable and, most likely, unworkable. Against a background of National Competition Policy, which the Committee assumes to prevail, the three models put forward do not in fact offer viable alternative scenarios, nor do they include serious proposals to safeguard access, equity and quality. While mention is made of the need to deal with problems facing Indigenous Australians, the Paper neither analyses these issues nor provides a set of detailed policy proposals designed to address them.

Learning for life does not provide an adequate analysis of the nature and role of higher education. It does not put forward a policy framework based on the facts of the current situation of the system, nor does it examine honestly and thoroughly the full range of possible directions for the future. The Paper does not contribute in a serious way to debate about Australian higher education policy.

NTEU's vision for the short to medium-term future of Australian higher education is contained in our submission to the Review. Rather than simply reiterate that vision, we will focus instead on the Discussion Paper and the reasons why its preferred options for the future should be soundly rejected.

In particular, NTEU rejects the following proposals and ideas contained in the Discussion Paper:

- the proposal for "student-centred" financing of tertiary education, or vouchers, at undergraduate and postgraduate levels;
- unregulated up-front tuition fees imposed by institutions
- reliance on a HECS-style mechanism as the sole safety-net for socioeconomically disadvantaged students in a deregulated higher education financing environment;
- direct and indirect public subsidies, including access for their students to subsidised loans, for private higher education providers;
- exposure of public higher education to the impact of National Competition Policy;

- the absence of Commonwealth funding support - either through supplementation or appropriate indexation of operating funding - for university salaries;
- the removal of institutional autonomy in relation to determining priorities for research and the accreditation of courses

1. INTRODUCTION

It is necessary to state from the outset that NTEU is extremely disappointed with the Discussion paper produced by the Committee.

We endorse the Committee's statement that Australians' prosperity - economic, social, cultural and spiritual - into the next century will depend on the quality of the education they acquire. However, it is the Union's view that the policy framework endorsed in the Discussion Paper will not maximise Australians' opportunities to gain access to and participate in a quality higher education system. The Committee has forfeited an opportunity to set a framework which would strengthen public post-compulsory education provision in Australia in favour of allowing future provision to be determined by market forces. It advocates an approach which will encourage the further decline of public investment in higher education, will expose universities to a degree of competition which would benefit a few and be destructive for many, and would decrease educational opportunities among significant sections of the Australian population.

The implicit premise of the Committee's proposals is that public funding cannot meet the costs of expanded post-compulsory education in the twenty-first century. Rather than accept a decline in public investment in higher education and rely on market forces to "regulate" participation, NTEU believes the committee should make a case for increasing the public stake in post-compulsory education, and using public resources efficiently to achieve optimum outcomes for the community.

Despite stating that levels of Government funding should remain at their current level or improve slightly, the Committee goes on to outline scenarios which would encourage the further withdrawal of Government from the funding, planning and provision of higher education. Government's role would essentially be that of exercising some form of "quality control"(through a bureaucratic accreditation system), and providing consumer information to prospective students. As a result, institutions would have greater financial autonomy, but less academic autonomy.

Despite stating that the level of the individual's contribution to the cost of his/her own education should be "fair, and not represent an excessive burden on students and their families", the Discussion Paper outlines a range of options all of which entail total deregulation of the fee-setting capacities of universities. Actual course costs will be left to the market: this approach ensures that there can be no guarantee that costs will not militate against equality of access and participation in the future.

In 1996, the Federal Government announced swingeing cuts to higher education funding, which would reduce 1996 forward estimates by 6% to the year 2001. At the same time, it introduced a raft of deregulatory changes which have encouraged the privatization of what was a high quality, publicly-funded higher education system. Perhaps the single most disappointing feature of this Discussion Paper is that the Committee has accepted the current level of deregulation and funding starvation as the starting point for further deregulation, without examining the consequences they have already had on access to higher education and opportunities to undertake quality teaching and research.

Therefore, in our introduction we will spend some time examining the existing state of deregulation and fee-paying in the sector, and demonstrate the negative impact they have had on quality, diversity and choice.

Funding Cuts

The changes introduced by the Federal Government are designed in part to offset declines in Government funding. In real terms, the cuts in foreshadowed public expenditure have resulted in:

- a reduction in the planned growth of publicly-funded places
- the shift of most postgraduate coursework into the fee-paying arena
- the loss of over 2000 university staff positions in 1996-97 (this does not include non-renewal of contracts and ordinary attrition)
- Closures of courses, departments, and foreshadowed campus closures. Areas typical of course closure - such as Music at La Trobe University and English at Northern Territory University - are those which are vulnerable to market forces, yet have high intrinsic value.

Indexation of Operating Grants and Salary Supplementation

The refusal of the Federal Government to provide any form of salary supplementation constitutes another "cute to university operating funding. Salaries form the largest expenditure item in university budgets, in most cases comprising over 80% of institutional operating expenditure. Therefore, to force institutions to fund all salary increases from within existing budgets will, over time, result in less money for teaching and research, and/or university salaries falling behind those of comparable professions. The Discussion Paper ignores the implications of this situation.

Just as the Government needs to invest in (for example) information technology, libraries and capital infrastructure to maintain the quality of Australian higher education, it also needs to invest in staff. It is the staff of universities who transform information into knowledge, and ensure the effective transmission of knowledge and ideas across the community. They need the support of their community to do their jobs. NTEU's experience of enterprise bargaining in an environment defined by contracting public funding has revealed to us that the community - including students and their families - understand and appreciate the need for public funding to underpin salary bargaining in higher education. The Committee and the Federal government should understand and act upon this.

The Discussion Paper makes vague reference to some of the problems associated with unfunded, productivity-based bargaining, but the paper commissioned from Global Alliance Ltd is much more forthright. It states quite unequivocally that "there appears to be a reasonable prima facie case that little more labour productivity improvement will be obtained from squeezing the system", and that future productivity benefits needed to come from capital investment or system re-engineering (pp. 27-28).

NTEU believes that only significant public investment in teaching and research personnel will maintain quality across the sector in the long term, and will ensure that Australian salaries achieve comparability with international levels. If Government is not to supplement operating grants to take account of salary increases - as argued in our Submission - there at least needs to be substantial revision of the formula used for indexation of public funding to the higher education sector, in order for institutionally-based salary bargaining to be both meaningful and effective.

Up-front Fees

Only eight universities have so far chosen to take advantage of the decision to permit full fee-paying undergraduate places in 1998, and the decision to do so has been in the face of significant student, staff and community opposition. The 25% cap on the proportion of fee-paying places has still not prevented substitution of fee-paying for HECS-liable places in high demand and expensive courses (such as Veterinary Science at the University of Sydney), therefore reducing access to public places.

The exorbitant fee levels charged in some courses reflect the extent to which fees are constructed as a determinant (as much as an indicator) of the market value attained/aspired to by some institutions. Contrary to the Committee's arguments, the market will not keep prices low: rather, it will lead to quite dramatic differentials in cost.

The Committee not only endorses the decision to allow up-front fees for undergraduates: it proposes a complete deregulation of fee-paying provisions, thereby allowing universities to charge whatever they choose on top of the student's "public entitlement", and to enrol unlimited numbers of fee-paying undergraduates. This would be disastrous from the point of view of equity and quality. The United States higher education system, which is the model favoured by the Committee, is a poor one for Australia to emulate. A recent Report from the Commission on National Investment in Higher Education entitled Breaking the Social Contract: the Fiscal Crisis in Universities found that tuition fees at public universities in the US had increased by more than 25% since 1990, and the more prestigious universities had increased their fees by even bigger margins. The Report concluded that these increases were a product of reduced Government funding and increased student numbers, but also reflected universities' desire to keep prices high to reflect "positional" value in the marketplace. It concluded that this trend would, if unchecked, have a "devastating" impact on participation among the socio-economically disadvantaged and on the social fabric - yet this is the path the West Committee would take Australia down. ⁱ

HECS Changes

The recent changes to HECS in Australia have demonstrated that even income-contingent fees can deter students from participation, if they are too high and must be repaid at low income levels. An evaluation of the impact of HECS on applications for higher education places in 1997 by DEETYA noted a small decline among school-leaver applications and a decline of 10% among "mature-age" applications. The latter decline was acknowledged to be almost certainly a result of the changes to HECS, as "mature-age" students are most likely to be immediately affected by higher HECS and lower thresholds for repayment. ⁱⁱ They are more likely to have financial commitments (including dependents) and to be working part-time, and therefore subject to HECS at the point of enrolment.

The decline in application rates looks set to continue, with preliminary application figures from NSW and ACT suggesting an even larger decline among school-leavers and 'mature-age', applicants for 1998. In Britain, application rates have plummeted since the announcement of a 1000 pound annual fee - so much so that the Education Minister, David Blunkett, has written to every second-year A-level student in the UK urging them to "think seriously about higher education". ⁱⁱⁱ

The Committee's tacit endorsement of these changes to HECS - and its suggestion that levels of fees be further deregulated - make a mockery of its concerns for access and equity. There is a simplistic wisdom which asserts that, because it is easier to measure private benefit than the externalities which flow from university education, students should pay more for their education. The reality is that asking students to pay beyond a certain point will have a demonstrable disincentive impact among sections of the population, particularly those which are economically disadvantaged.

Disregard for the Concerns of University Staff

While the Discussion Paper acknowledges "low morale" among university staff, it is remarkably silent on their concerns. Students and staff voices - and, most notably, the voices of general staff - are missing from this Paper, and it is no wonder that many have expressed to us their feeling of disillusionment and marginalisation arising from the Review process.

Many university staff are inspired by a sense of vocation. They will accept lower wages than they might command outside the academy because they are committed to the project of teaching and research, and because of the intellectual independence and opportunities to extend the boundaries of knowledge offered by university work. However, in order to achieve their full potential, they require:

- security of employment and with it, a degree of stability in their workplace. As noted in our submission, security of employment has significantly declined among university staff in recent years, while competition for research, project and conference funding, appointments and security of employment has markedly increased. Judith Brett has argued forcefully that while a degree of competition may be productive, competition as manifest in a "marketised" policy framework for higher education is actually antithetical to productive academic activity, and to the exchange of information and knowledge within the academic community. A copy of her paper is attached.

- A degree of intellectual independence. Institutions must be accountable to the Government, to their students, and to the wider community, including industry and other employers. At the same time, their staff must be able to pursue independent lines of inquiry, which will extend the frontiers of knowledge and create a platform for long-term wealth creation. If staff are working to a particular market, they are unlikely to engage in disciplines or activities which are "unfashionable" with that market - regardless of their intrinsic or long-term value.
- Appropriate rewards. We have already raised our concerns regarding salary supplementation and the appropriate indexation of university operating grants to fund salary bargaining. While salaries are important to staff, so too are opportunities for professional development and career progression. The increasing reliance on external funding within universities has resulted in a decline in opportunities for academic and general staff to progress within their chosen fields: instead, research shows that many young staff, especially women, are caught in a cycle of short-term, contract or casual employment.^{iv} Not only does this lead to many promising and talented individuals leaving the system, it reduces its attractions for those who might be considering entering it.

The Committee must address the concerns of staff in a more meaningful fashion if its revised discussion paper is to have any credibility.

2. STUDENT-CENTRED FUNDING

The model advocated by the Committee for the financing of higher education is in fact a voucher system. The Committee, in putting forward its three model options, exhibits either extreme naivety or, possibly, disingenuousness. While it purports to offer a choice by presenting three apparently different models for the financing of higher education in its teaching function, the Discussion Paper actually provides only one scenario which is viable within its assumed policy framework. This is the case because, clearly, against a background of "contestable" funding courtesy of National Competition Policy (NCP) and the broader agenda of microeconomic reform, apparent distinctions between the models dissolve. If the Government embraces NCP in higher education then the various regulatory measures embodied in models 1 and 2 cannot remain. Therefore the sole model, in any practical sense, offered by the Committee is the radically deregulatory third scenario. This involves sweeping reform of funding across the entire tertiary education sector, replacing institutional block grants with "student-centred" funding and unregulated tuition fees.

NTEU believes that the Committee's approach, based on "student-centred" funding or vouchers plus fees, is fundamentally wrong. The Union has presented arguments to this effect in its initial submission to the Review (pp.38-39). In summary, it is a fallacy to assert that vouchers enhance and facilitate choice for students, because:

- in an environment in which tuition fees are completely unregulated, the level of fees determines and limits choice for the vast majority of students, especially when the fees are charged up-front. Deferred-payment options soften, but do not eliminate, the deterrent effects of fees: see below;
- in a regulated fees environment, institutional admission policies nevertheless prevail. The higher education "market" is not a "pure" market and does not act like other markets. It trades on scarcity-value and status to the exclusion of other considerations because of the role of university qualifications as credentials and signifiers in the labour market. ^v Thus institutions are concerned to protect their perceived position in the market by ensuring that their credentials do not lose value by becoming too widely available. An institution which becomes too accessible - by admitting too many students or by failing to apply strict entry criteria - quickly loses its position in the pecking order and experiences a fall in demand. For practical purposes, any increase in student "choice" resulting from the abolition of universities' student load targets would be minimal. The entry of private institutions or overseas players to the market for public voucher-dollars would similarly have little real impact on "choice" because of the constraints imposed by their additional fee structures;
- in both deregulated and regulated environments, a less stable system results from the application of voucher-style funding. Courses and even entire institutions lose their viability (especially in regional areas) as the role of Government in guiding and moderating enrolments disappears. Quality of remaining course offerings is at risk because the inherently unstable funding base renders it difficult to plan and develop curricula and resources in a sustained and rational manner. All of these factors effectively reduce students' choices.

Vouchers further limit choice by limiting the amount of Government-subsidised education to which an individual is entitled. Currently, people are able to gain access to publicly funded education and training opportunities at their own discretion - subject to entry requirements and other relevant life circumstances. There is no evidence that individuals "waste" public resources by engaging in frivolous or unnecessary study. On the contrary, limiting temporally or financially the availability of access to tertiary education and training impedes rather than facilitates the international trend towards "lifelong learning": it would militate against labour market flexibility and career development for individuals.

Further, the adoption of voucher funding as a "contestable" funding mechanism, on whatever basis and for whatever reason, itself encourages increased deregulation, the growth of commercialization and the establishment of a strong private-sector presence. It assumes that "contestability" is either the best or the inevitable way forward and in so doing creates the preconditions for its rapid spread. To move to vouchers without first asking whether this will take us in the most desirable direction from a broader policy perspective is to tackle the task of policy development from the wrong end.

The Government may be interested in creating a more contestable environment in the system. There are many strong reasons to oppose this approach. However, if this approach is adopted, a much wider range of options should be considered.

The Committee fails also to mount an adequate case for its proposal that, in general, public subsidy should be pegged at 50% of actual course costs. There are two separate issues here - the 50% quantum on the one hand, and the relationship to course costs on the other. Currently charges imposed on students through HECS are not directly related to cost. It could be argued that the cross-subsidies consequent upon this situation are desirable from a range of public policy perspectives. The differing costs of courses are not necessarily related to income potential for their graduates.

But there is a further issue: in a deregulated environment, the budgetary implications for Government of a pure market approach are serious: costs could not be contained unless the Commonwealth retained control over how much was to be spent on each student. A shift towards "expensive" courses would leave the Government with a much larger financial liability.

Presumably a 50% limit on a voucher's value would act as a deterrent to some extent on such a trend. The other way to contain costs to Government is, as the Paper suggests, to limit in absolute terms the monetary value of any individual's voucher. Potentially, though, this would lock out the disadvantaged and risk-averse from "expensive" areas of study including medicine; this has serious social implications.

The Committee, however, appears to have accepted the Industry Commission's view that, since the externalities resulting from higher education cannot be measured, then they should be assumed to amount to 50% of its total eventual value. There is absolutely no basis for this arbitrary conclusion. It is ludicrous to base a huge and complex system of funding and financing on a figure plucked out of the air, especially given the Committee's stated concern for students and their families.

All of the arguments so far presented apply both to undergraduate and postgraduate areas of enrolment. Ross Williams (in his commissioned paper for the Committee, Appendix 14) argues that a voucher policy in the area of research student funding could be tried; this, he says, does not entail the same degree of dislocation and radical change for the system as a whole. NTEU, however, opposes this proposal (see section 4 on research). In any case, because of the vast difference in scale between the two groups of students, it could be argued that even if a workable system could be developed in the postgraduate research area, its viability would not of itself carry clear implications for the much larger undergraduate "market".

Finally, vouchers, as a system of financing higher education on a large scale, are untried anywhere in the world. While not in itself a compelling reason to oppose the policy, this means that there would have to be very good grounds for experimenting in this way in the Australian context. This is especially true when it is remembered that the system has already recently undergone massive and destabilizing. A prudent and responsible approach to policy-making requires that, before major dislocation is imposed, especially where the full effects of such change cannot be predicted, then the case in favour of such a course must be compelling, clearly and explicitly argued and subject to broad consensus. Such argument is missing from the Discussion Paper; such consensus does not exist.

It would be far more fruitful for the Committee to ask itself what is wrong with the current system, and how it could work better. The strengthening of the process of educational profiles would be a useful place to start. It is through the profiles negotiations and associated reporting processes that Government can encourage innovation, responsiveness and efficiency, and ensure accountability for the use of public funds.

3. DEREGULATION AND NATIONAL COMPETITION POLICY

While conceptually distinct, the issues of deregulation in higher education and the application of National Competition Policy (NCP) are closely related in practical policy terms. Deregulation of the university system in Australia is largely being driven by the NCP agenda, although the impetus also involves a desire on the part of Government to reduce its share of higher education expenditure and an ideological belief that a "userpays" approach to public policy is appropriate. Both of these aims could be met, however, within a regulated framework. The key issue which links regulation and NCP is the ideal role of private providers in the Australian system.

The Committee proposes an essentially deregulated framework for the system which admits private providers to the market and provides them with varying levels of assistance under the three funding/financing models. In the final analysis, however, variation between these models, as explained above, disappears because an environment ruled by competition - in particular the application of the principle of *competitive neutrality* - is presupposed. Unless the core functions of higher education remain immune from the application of NCP, it would not be possible to prevent the entry of private, including overseas, operators into the Australian market on the same terms as those applying to existing "public" providers. Therefore models 1 and 2 are not viable. Model 3, the profoundly deregulated model, would prevail.

NTEU opposes the deregulation of higher education. The Union also believes that the central functions of the system - publicly-funded undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, and publicly-funded research - should be excluded from the effects of the NCP agenda. The discussion which follows deals with both of these issues by arguing against the first idea, and in support of the second proposition.

Deregulation

First, we challenge the view that a market-based system in higher education would be more efficient, effective and that in such an environment equity and quality could be preserved. Markets in higher education do not drive costs down, especially in the highly desirable areas and institutions, where prices (fees) rise to whatever the market will bear. Evidence in the postgraduate area, where a market already operates in many disciplines, shows this to be true (for example, the Discussion Paper (p.147) cites a fee of \$40,000 per annum for a Master's course in Business). On the other hand a market approach, when applied to the "bottom" or newly-established end of the market, forces costs down to levels where quality is seriously threatened - to the detriment of students and staff and of the reputation of the system as a whole.

Efficiency, accountability, flexibility and even parsimony are laudable aims. It is advisable, however, to look for direct means of achieving these particular ends rather than assuming that the application of a market approach is the best way to promote them. The market, while possibly operating incidentally and indirectly to improve efficiency, for example, introduces complications, inequalities and unexpectedly uneven outcomes which may in themselves be inefficient; the same is true of the other desired goals referred to.

For example, there is evidence from Australia's international education programs that the costs of entrepreneurial activities themselves may outweigh the benefits. A recent study found that overseas students may have cost institutions as much as \$140m in 1993.^{vi} While much attention is paid to the potential profit accruing from such activities, in fact there is at least in some instances net cross-subsidisation from the publicly-funded to the commercial areas of universities, especially in a deregulated environment.

A deregulated market would encourage the entry of a plethora of new private providers. Most of these would be small, specialized. Nevertheless, this would lead to wasteful duplication of courses and of resources, and would undermine wages and conditions in the industry as a whole, with consequences for quality and for the international standing of the Australian system. Experience in the VET sector and overseas indicates the potential for these outcomes to occur. In New Zealand, for instance, a country of a little over three million people, there are now over sixty providers of training for child care workers. Serious questions arise in such circumstances about the adequacy of much of such training, and the educational viability of the courses offered.

The issue of regulation and course accreditation arises here, and this arises for "public" institutions as much as private. Institutions such as universities which are currently self accrediting stand to lose autonomy and to be more closely regulated than at present, in ways that undermine their intellectual freedom and their capacity to make their own pedagogical judgments. In some respects, deregulation actually means more regulation -or certainly the relocation and standardization of regulation. The loss for existing publicly-located institutions would be in their diversity, direct public accountability, transparency and democratic governance.

The necessity to behave more competitively would drive existing public institutions to secrecy in their planning processes. Co-operation and collaboration between institutions would be discouraged rather than encouraged, again with consequences for efficient use of scarce and expensive resources, and for high-quality co-operative teaching and research projects. The very things that the market was supposed to deliver - enhanced efficiency, lower cost, increased responsiveness to "clients" - would be sharply diminished.

For students, a market would offer a bewildering array of options, depending of course on cost, but would not necessarily provide better choices. More choice is not better unless real options are broadened. At the same time, students' access to decision-making structures and processes, and probably their representation on formal institutional bodies such as Councils and Academic Boards would be reduced. They would face high up-front fees for many courses, as well as ancillary charges for services and facilities. They have nothing to gain.

Fees and Regulation

If institutions were allowed, as the Committee proposes in all three of its financing models, to charge fees in an unregulated manner, then other forms of deregulation would necessarily follow. Under such a regime it would also be essential to provide for students access to some kind of financial assistance in the form of loans to pay what might well be substantial upfront charges. The Committee appears to oscillate on how far it wants to see this assistance made available, and what precisely the role of Government would be in such schemes. It seems, however, to be suggesting that, for at least a first undergraduate qualification, all students in either public or private institutions should be able to pay their fees by means of a deferred-payment, HECS-style loan. The current HECS scheme does not feature a real or market rate of interest and therefore involves an imputed subsidy on the part of the Commonwealth. It is unclear whether Government subsidies for the broader HECS-style loan system proposed by the Committee are envisaged.

The current HECS scheme involves an average imputed Commonwealth subsidy of around 35%. It is possible, as Bruce Chapman has described (Discussion Paper, Appendix 13, "Some financing issues for Australian Higher education teaching", section 7), to build this subsidy into the loan itself while retaining the income-contingent payment feature of the scheme. By increasing the initial amount of the borrower's liability by a loading of 35% (or undoubtedly more if a significantly higher tuition fee was involved), the scheme could become self-financing. The role of the Commonwealth could be restricted to the provision of a guarantee against the death of the borrower, and similar eventualities. Even that could be eliminated by means of an insurance premium attached to the loan. But all of this means that the real cost to students, and the level of the debt burden for graduates, increases exponentially. Even if repayment were to be deferred until a particular income threshold were reached, this debt would constitute a substantial barrier and deterrent to students. In addition, repayment schedules would need to be telescoped to allow for the fact that larger sums were to be recouped. Thus the scheme's effectiveness as a means of ensuring access would be limited. The effect on demand for higher education of a relatively modest increase in potential debt, occasioned by the introduction of the new HECS charges from 1997, illustrates the poor potential of this approach to solve the problems of access and equity created by a high fees regime.

The alternative - that Government should subsidise the loans of all students, regardless of where they study and what level of tuition fees they pay - is neither affordable nor equitable. Therefore an unregulated upfront fees policy, even with a deferred-payment option, is not sustainable.

Competition Policy

The single most important issue facing higher education right now is the fundamental question of the application of National Competition Policy to the publicly-funded system. This question is in fact being decided separately from the Review process, and was not explicitly dealt with by the Committee in its Discussion Paper. Instead it was implicitly assumed, first, that the system would be subjected to NCP-inspired reforms, and, secondly, that this was either good or at least inevitable. Given the far-reaching implications of NCP for higher education, this is a surprising oversight.

As an assumed background for policy, the NCP agenda entails that partly deregulatory policies and user-pays approaches collapse into fully-fledged ones. This is unavoidable because the principle of competitive neutrality, which is the cornerstone of competition policy, insists that all providers be treated the same. The Committee, then, has failed to offer us any genuine alternatives to its apparently favoured approach. It has left us in an impossible environment for the implementation of any policy direction which, for example, tries to achieve a balance between functions and activities which are funded and coordinated by Government, on the one hand, and entrepreneurial activities and income on the other.

The only sensible way forward for the Commonwealth is to reach agreement with the States to exclude the public provision of higher education from the application of NCP. This is justifiable in the public interest, because it is the best way to preserve access, equity and rational planning and co-ordination of the system, and to ensure public accountability for the expenditure of taxpayers' money in this area. The previous Government intended to take this course (see, for evidence of this the Second Reading Speech by George Gear on the *Competition Policy Reform Bill 1995*), but unfortunately failed to guarantee the appropriate outcome through legislation.

The Higher Education Funding Act can be used as the vehicle for both the regulation and, where desirable, restriction of institutional commercial activities, and the shielding of publicly-funded functions and activities in the sector from the requirements of NCP. At the same time the Government needs to shield the Australian public system from the similar effects of competition on an international scale - by, for example, seeking to reserve this area in its current negotiations on the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI). Unless it does both of these things, the resulting "open" competitive domestic market collapses into an "open" international market. This would have profound implications for Australia's national cultural sovereignty as well as for regulation, quality assurance and wages and conditions for higher education staff. It is all very well for the Discussion Paper to endorse a few Australian universities' becoming "Harvards of the South", but the Committee's model would conceivably result in the real Harvard and a multitude of other foreign-based providers setting up campuses in Australia and claiming Australian Government financial support. This would expose Australian universities to a measure of competition which would devastate some institutions.

The Australian higher education system is already subject to healthy, if constrained, competition - competition to attract the best staff and students, for research funds, for new developments and programs, for growth funds, research dollars and commercial income, including fee income. NTEU would argue that, in certain respects, this competition is actually destructive, especially where it militates against co-operation and undermines quality and standards, as sometimes occurs in the area of international education. Here, regulation is important. Generally speaking, however, the current system of educational profiles and the competitive allocation, by various mechanisms, of research funds ensures that universities seeking public funding are required to demonstrate that they will use such money to best advantage.

In general, there are no good reasons for opening up higher education to competition beyond that already inherent in the system. Thus:

- If greater efficiency is a desirable goal, then this can be achieved by a rigorous profiles process and a prominent formal role for DEETYA in this respect.
- If variety and choice for students should be enhanced, then these can better be achieved through interactive co-operation between institutions and Government than through a market where "suppliers" seek to replicate each other in order to woo customers from their competitors, reducing prices (fees) at the expense of educational quality or inflating them to bolster market position.

- Positive outcomes of competition can be achieved within a public system of higher education by balancing competitive approaches in appropriate areas against proper planning and central involvement by Government in overall development and maintenance of the system.

In public policy, contestability is a means rather than an end in itself. The Committee has failed to understand this.

Infrastructure Charges

It has been argued that, if a level playing field is to be created in higher education, then those institutions enjoying the advantage bestowed by publicly-funded infrastructure and capital stock should pay a return to Government for its use. This matter is extremely complex for two reasons. First, universities hold land and occupy infrastructure on a variety of legal bases, and subject to a range of restrictions. A single institution may own certain land freehold, lease other property, and enjoy the use of further land and buildings subject to various legal restrictions and caveats. The precise nature of all of these relationships has considerable bearing on the application of any capital charge. For example, the current dispute surrounding the ownership, control and use of the St George Campus of the University of New South Wales is likely to cost both the Commonwealth and the NSW Government considerable sums in legal fees to resolve the question of who in fact owns the site, whether restrictions apply to its use, and whether, by whom and to what extent the University of NSW should be compensated if either ownership or control of the campus is transferred to the University of Wollongong. These problems illustrate the difficulties that would inevitably arise in many other instances if the Commonwealth sought to impose capital or infrastructure charges on publicly-funded institutions.

Second, the application of a capital charge would have uneven and sharply differential consequences for institutions. While on the surface it may appear that such a charge would oblige the wealthiest institutions to pay the most, this is not necessarily the case. Many of the newer and less financially advantaged institutions occupy prime real estate; RMIT and the University of Technology, Sydney, are examples. Furthermore, the various land tenure arrangements referred to above may mean that certain asset-rich institutions are immune from charges with respect to land which they own freehold, or which is owned by their subsidiary companies.

Therefore NTEU urges caution in the development of proposals along these lines. The problems created by attempts to impose such charges may be greater than any benefit which may be derived.

Finally, the Discussion Paper fails to make a case for its assertion that in general Australian universities have no incentive to manage and use their assets efficiently.. Nor does it invoke empirical evidence for the view that in fact they are inefficient in their asset utilization. There is much evidence for the contrary proposition: the significant improvements in efficiency, measured in terms of expenditure per student place, since 1988 - amounting to over 3% per annum in real terms - imply among other things an overall gain in this area. Once again, the Committee has relied on a preconceived view of the sector rather than a systematic examination of the facts.

4. RESEARCH

The Committee's views on the future funding of research in universities appear less clearly- formed than its proposals for funding student places. However, the phasing in of a student-centred funding model based on a "public education entitlement", or Voucher", would in itself have significant implications for the conduct and funding of research in universities; firstly, through the explicit uncoupling of teaching from research in institutional funding mechanisms. This could conceivably give rise to "teaching-only" universities or community colleges, a separation of research from teaching within institutions, and an increase in the number of "teaching-only" academics. These consequences run counter to the Committee's recognition of the "complementarities" between teaching and research. Indeed, the proposed separation of funding mechanisms for research and teaching reveals an inadequate understanding of the nature of academic work, wherein the production and dissemination of knowledge are linked.

Secondly, the proposed extension of "student-centred funding" or vouchers into the postgraduate research arena would certainly have a marked impact on the organization of research at the institutional level. Issues associated with student-centred funding, and the problems they raise, are dealt with in section two of our response. The model proposed for research students is based on merit rather than entitlement: students' access to a "voucher" is determined by their ranking on a national list of honours graduates. The establishment of such a list would be, in itself, expensive and problematic. The Committee suggests that such a list be based on the "quality" of the host institution's research environment - measured according to institutional research performance (presumably, grant income and performance assessed against the Composite Index) and research training performance (number of postgraduates through). This is an artificial way of moderating assessment, based on the resources of the university rather than the actual achievements of students. It is also unfair. Honours students enrolled at an institution which was not competitive on the basis of measurable research performance would be disadvantaged, regardless of the quality of their work. Honours students would seek to attend well-resourced institutions, regardless of the quality of the learning environment, as this would increase their chances of a postgraduate voucher. The net effect would be to reinforce research concentration in a few institutions, and pockets of excellence in other institutions would be at risk as a result (Ret NTEU Submission pp. 24-25).

Another undesirable consequence of the proposed allocation of postgraduate research vouchers is the implied closure of pathways into postgraduate research. If postgraduate research entitlements are to be allocated on the basis of a ranking of honours students, how are the relative merits of (for example) people who undertake graduate diplomas instead of honours to be assessed? How would the merits of a potential student who completed honours several years earlier be assessed against the merits of this year's crop? The Committee's proposal is a narrow one which fails to recognise the diverse learning pathways taken by students into postgraduate as well as undergraduate research.

NTEU opposes the suggestions for postgraduate "vouchers", and instead advocates increasing the number of APAs without stipend (HECS-exempt places) to replace existing HECS-liable postgraduate research load. The current mechanism for allocating these places is fair, equitable and provides students with a greater measure of choice than would be the case under a "voucher" scheme.

Thirdly, the Committee hints that funding for university research should be more "openly contestable" between public and private providers: certainly, logic suggests that if private providers have access to public money for the provision of undergraduate teaching, why should such competition not be extended to the research funding arena, with Government having a role in specifying priority areas where research is to be undertaken?

Public sector research agencies and private organizations have access to ARC funding in collaboration with university researchers, and through a range of schemes designed to foster industry-university collaboration. NTEU is strongly opposed to opening up funding for research to further competition from other public and private institutions. Increasing the contestability of research funding means that universities would lose the component of operating grants currently tagged for research, and which allows them a degree of autonomy in pursuing specific objectives and fostering the careers of early career researchers. Small amounts of discretionary research funding allocated at the institutional level - for example, postdoctoral fellowships, conference funding and seeding grants - play a vital role in fostering the institutions' research culture, but would be swept away if all funding were

contestable on a project basis. The necessity for universities to compete with private providers and other public sector agencies such as CSIRO, which is more focused toward applied research, would also undermine their capacity to undertake basic research.

In terms of current arrangements for funding research in universities, the Committee identifies four "weaknesses":

Funding mechanisms: In NTEU's view, the main problem with the allocation of funding for university research is lack of money. In 1997, ARC Large Grants success rates hit a low of around 19%. Excellent proposals are not being funded, and talented researchers spend a great deal of time preparing and assessing grant applications, to little end. This is not productive competition: rather, it represents the worst sort of inefficiency.. Government funding has not kept pace with the growth of the higher education sector's research capacity and, because the benefits of basic and strategic research cannot readily be captured by the individual, it would be futile to expect business and industry to pick up the shortfall.

The Committee's view that not all academics should be funded to do research is not the answer to this problem. Firstly, it contradicts their stated belief in the complementary relationship between research, teaching and learning. It is already a fact of university life that some academics spend significantly more of their time on teaching than research, and vice versa. There is no simple formula which defines the "desirable" balance between teaching and research. However, all academics must have the opportunity to undertake research at some points during their careers, for a range of reasons: to further their knowledge and skills; to enhance their teaching, to refresh their passion for their chosen discipline; to address specific problems and, perhaps most importantly, to contribute to the intellectual life of their institution and their community. Without these opportunities, the quality of the academic enterprise will decline and with it, the quality of teaching.

A diverse range of funding sources of plays a role in ensuring a diversity of research outcomes. NTEU believes a *balance* of project-based funding and block funding to institutions is essential to achieve the full range of outcomes deriving from university research: public benefit, advancement of knowledge, support for proven successful researchers, support for talented early-career researchers and support for areas of strength identified at an institutional level. NTEU supports an increase in the real value of the Research Quantum to 6% of operating grants (currently it stands at 4.9%) and its retention as a pool of discretionary funding to support research at an institutional level.

Infrastructure funding: NTEU supports the Committee's recommendation that infrastructure funding be maintained at around 40c in the project dollar. This will require not only a maintenance of the increased levels of funding introduced in 1996, but a real annual increase in funding for research infrastructure.

However, it would not be useful to tie all RIBG funding *directly* to projects, as suggested by the Committee. This would reduce universities' discretionary power in relation to strategic expenditure on research infrastructure, and is potentially inefficient in terms of duplication of resources. An infrastructure funding mechanism should be developed which recognises the amount of project funding flowing to the institution, supports resource sharing between universities (allowing joint purchase of capital equipment, for example) and includes a component for large expenditure items (like the current Research Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities Program).

Priority setting: The committee argues there is a strong need for priority-setting in publicly-funded research. This echoes the recommendations of the Commission of Audit Report released last year, which argued for priority setting across all areas of publicly funded research.

The Committee doesn't directly address whether or not priorities should be structural or thematic (discipline-based), but implies both. NTEU's view - set out in our submission to the Stocker Review of Arrangements for Publicly-funded Science and Technology - is as follows:

- Any approach to national priority setting should be coordinated across public sector research agencies, and based on dialogue between Government, funding agencies, researchers and research users.

- Any approach to national priority-setting should be structural rather than thematic. In particular, there should be no attempt to use crude quantitative indicators (such as existing expenditure on fields of research and its claimed links to socioeconomic objectives as defined by ABS) in order to identify discipline-based "priorities". It is important that institutions, and the researchers working within them, retain a capacity to make independent decisions about the nature of research priorities.

University-Industry interaction: As the Committee notes, this is an area of institutional activity which needs to develop. However, it should be remembered that institutions are coming off a relatively low base in this regard, and there has been rapid expansion in a short amount of time. In particular, a recent study commissioned by the ARC (*Using Basic Research Part 11*) reveals complex patterns of interaction between university and industry which are highly productive and hitherto unrecognized (REF NTEU Submission p 22).

Support should be given to those schemes which foster genuine interaction - that is, a real exchange between universities and industries for the benefit of individual users and the community as a whole, rather than the "colonization" of one culture by another. Examples include the CRC Program, the SPIRT Scheme, and the APA (Industry) Scheme.

One area not canvassed by the Committee at all is the issue of *research careers*, and the need to provide talented staff with appropriate incentive to participate in university research.

Declining security of employment is particularly marked among staff whose salaries derive from project funding. It is not uncommon for research assistants and research officers (often with excellent research track records and usually with postgraduate qualifications) to be employed for contracts of three, six or nine-month duration. Along with insecurity of employment comes fewer opportunities for career progression, and the consequence is that many talented researchers are deserting universities for alternative employment.

These trends are a direct result of declining levels of funding for university research (including that provided through operating grants). It is also a product of the failure of funding for the large granting agencies (in particular, the Australian Research Council and the National Health and Medical Research Council) to take into account of the impact of salary rises negotiated at an institutional level. As a letter from Professor Frank Larkins in the *Australian Higher Education* supplement earlier this year pointed out, this failure to supplement grants represents a real cut in their dollar value, with disastrous consequences for research.

NTEU recommends that funding for NHMRC and ARC be indexed to reflect a proportion of real salary movements within the higher education sector, to help ensure that the salaries and conditions of research staff do not fall behind those of their colleagues.

5. ACHIEVING AND ENSURING QUALITY

The responsibility to ensure accountability for the use of public funds in higher education, and to guarantee quality, access and equity, rests in the final analysis with Government. It must be discharged either by means of tight, and often intrusive, regulation of all providers or else via a system like the current one where higher education institutions are established, constrained and overseen by detailed legislation which nevertheless allows them considerable practical autonomy. There is an appropriate and fine balance inherent in the current situation. Institutional integrity and probity is guaranteed through their acts of establishment and attendant regulation and other Government priorities, and the monitoring of performance, are enforced through the conditions set out in the Higher Education Funding Act (HEFA). NTEU attaches to this submission its recently-adopted policy on the regulation of private higher education provision.

In its Paper the Committee identifies several areas in higher education where regulation is essential. These include the prudential aspects of private institutions' activities and the quality of courses offered. In general terms, however, the Discussion Paper devotes little attention to issues of regulation, accreditation and institutional governance. In particular it does not provide articulated and detailed proposals in these areas, despite their centrality to the issues with which the Paper deals. This is particularly surprising in the light of the fact that the regulation and accreditation of a more "open" market in higher education (under National Competition Policy) were two matters explicitly referred to the Committee by the Government. The disappointing lack of attention to these crucial issues, on which many decisions about the future shape of the system could well turn, does not assist the debate.

In this section NTEU comments on a series of connected issues related to quality and accountability: accreditation, regulation of private providers, institutional governance and, finally, teaching quality.

As stated earlier in this response, NTEU does not favour the creation of conditions conducive to the growth of a private sector in higher education, if the cost is in the quality and viability of public universities. To the extent that such provision already exists, however, and given that existing public institutions are, by various means, progressively shifting their activities into corporate structures, then the questions of regulation and accreditation in these areas must nevertheless be addressed. To some extent, these processes must be designed to prevent the practice on the part of publicly-funded institutions of transferring activities beyond the public sphere and into the corporate -through the use of wholly and partly owned corporate structures. In so far as this represents an attempt to avoid regulation and public accountability, it should be resisted by Government.

In the case of genuinely "private" provision, NTEU proposes that the Government adopt the following policy:

- no institution or provider wishing to operate as a university in Australia should be able to do so except as established by State or Federal Act of Establishment, with such legislation providing for the constitution of governing bodies, supreme academic bodies, and other structures as appropriate, and also detailing the powers of the senior office-holders of the institution, in a manner similar to existing university acts; and
- no other provider should be allowed to offer higher education courses, leading to a recognised higher education award, except where this is carried out under contract, licence or similar formal arrangement with an existing institution listed in and subject to the requirements of the Higher Education Funding Act, and subject also to the normal academic processes of that institution, in particular its academic board, however called.

NTEU does not believe that such private institutions and providers should be eligible to receive Commonwealth funds. This position is in accordance with the Union's policy on the regulation of private higher education provision, attached. The policy also goes to the regulation and accreditation of higher education provision by institutions and other providers located in the VET sector.

An alternative approach is the establishment, at State or Federal level, of accreditation and regulatory bodies. In an environment where NCP applied to the sector, the principle of competitive neutrality would require that existing (public) institutions submitted themselves to such scrutiny and regulation alongside new "market" entrants and private providers. This would be strongly resisted by existing universities as yet another layer of regulation and

Government intrusion, and in any case is unnecessary given the existing complementary powers of the Commonwealth and the States in relation to these institutions. Therefore this idea is not supported. NTEU advocates the utilization of existing quality-control and regulatory structures, via the policy outlined above, for the purposes of regulating and accrediting in new areas of activity.

The NTEU approach to regulation and accreditation assumes robust, open, accountable and representative institutional governance structures and processes. The Committee, on the other hand, appears to believe that institutional governance is a matter best approached as if it were the narrowly-based financial management of a company:

"..the governance structures of many universities are likely to be inappropriate in a more competitive environment. This issue should be raised in the broader context of reforming institutional financial arrangements."
(Paper p. 34)

Such a view seems to presuppose that accreditation and other forms of quality control are not the business of institutions themselves, but that they should be assumed by some outside body, leaving the non-academic management of each institution located in each university. Again, this would be strongly resisted. To propose such a split of functions ignores what many would consider to be an important aspect of the very nature of the university - its academic autonomy, and the necessary subordination of all aspects of its functions to its central missions of teaching, research and community service.

Finally, the Committee comments on the importance of good teaching in higher education. Again, its lack of firm proposals is disappointing. Furthermore, the notion that good teaching should be "rewarded" is not consistent with a market approach to higher education. The market will not provide such rewards: teaching does not attract external revenue on the same scale as research, except in boutique institutions and/or courses where very high fees are charged. In a market environment only some institutions would be able to afford to reward good teaching with high salaries - thereby contributing to quality differentials across the sector. Good teaching should be recognised for the public good derived from an educated citizenry, and rewarded through public investment in higher education.

6. INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

NTEU believes that now, more than ever, it is vital that Australia demonstrates a commitment to the education of its Indigenous citizens, and to the principles of reconciliation. In this respect, Indigenous participation in higher education is very important, not just in terms of the benefits which flow to Indigenous students, their families and communities; but to non-Indigenous Australians who are thereby able to experience and learn from Indigenous people.

While the Committee has stated its concern that Indigenous Australians' participation in post-compulsory education be maximised, it has made no recommendations which would support this goal. Indeed, NTEU wishes to draw attention to what we believe would be the inimical consequences of the Committee's proposals for Indigenous Australians, in terms of their participation and opportunities for employment in higher education.

Indigenous Australians' Participation in Higher Education

In 1997, there were approximately 7,500 Indigenous students enrolled in higher education institutions. More than 5,000 of these are enrolled in degree or sub-degree courses (1,442 in enabling courses alone). These figures reflect the fact that, despite significant gains in the past two decades, Indigenous Australians remain under-represented in higher education, and are severely under-represented at the postgraduate level.

However, Indigenous Australians are over-represented among socio-economically disadvantaged sections of the population, which stand to lose from the deregulation of fee-charging practices. The Higher Education Council's recent report on fee-paying in the postgraduate arena illustrated this point, with Indigenous people, women and others lacking access to economic wealth severely under-represented.^{vii} Social equity plays no role in the market: its achievement is a function of Government regulation. The introduction of vouchers and the deregulation of fees will reduce choices for Indigenous Australians, by increasing the real costs of education to the individual and his or her family (this is particularly relevant for Indigenous people, whose identification is often with an extended family and a wider community, and who may experience increased financial responsibilities as a result).

It should also be remembered that many Indigenous students are less mobile, because of their community obligations and their location in remote parts of Australia. Greater differentiation between institutions will not enhance their choices, particularly if resources are concentrated in the hands of a few rich metropolitan institutions. There are relatively large populations of Indigenous students in some regional universities, particularly in NSW and Queensland, and these students will be disadvantaged if the range and quality of offerings in smaller, regional universities are reduced as a result of unfettered competition.

While Indigenous access to higher education has increased, attrition rates are high. Effective mechanisms for student support are vital to combat attrition, and to maintain an accessible and equitable higher education system. In this respect, the Government's changes to Abstudy (to be implemented in January 1998) should be condemned by the Committee. Despite winding back some of the worst measures, the Government still plans to implement changes to Abstudy which will result in several thousand students having their allowances reduced or removed. This decision was not based on any suggestions that students should not be entitled to this level of support; rather, it reflected a desire to "bring Abstudy into line" with Austudy, and thus failed to recognise the fundamental differences between the two programs.

NTEU supports regular reviews of Abstudy's effectiveness (as recently undertaken by ATSIC, although that Report has not been released), but opposes arbitrary cuts such as those undertaken in last year's Budget. We were pleased to note the government's withdrawal of some of the more ludicrous measures, but believe those which remain should be reconsidered. Our submission to the Government on this issue (made prior to the amendments to the Budget package) are attached.

Indigenous Staff in Australian Higher Education

Relatively few Indigenous Australians are employed in universities. NTEU believes that it is crucially important that their numbers increase, for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is important for the nurturing and transmission of Indigenous Australians' knowledge within all aspects of the work of higher education institutions. Secondly, Indigenous staff, as role models, can promote participation among Indigenous students and encourage those who aspire to employment in higher education institutions. Finally, all Australians, and in particular non-indigenous staff and students, benefit from a pluralistic educational culture which recognises a variety of knowledges, experiences and perspectives.

The 1995 National review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples noted these factors, and set out a number of steps for employers on Indigenous staff in educational institutions to adopt: for example, providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with opportunities to upgrade qualifications, to achieve security of employment, and ensure that pay and conditions do not discriminate between Indigenous and non-indigenous Australians.^{viii} NTEU fully supports these principles and, given the low numbers of Indigenous students enrolled in postgraduate research, further believes that a postgraduate "cadetship" should be instituted to encourage Indigenous people to undertake postgraduate research and enter careers in university. Certainly, the national list of honours students proposed by the Committee for the allocation of postgraduate research "vouchers" would discriminate against Indigenous people, who are more likely to come to postgraduate research in later life, via postgraduate coursework or measures for recognition of prior learning.

Initiatives to support Indigenous employment would not be consistent with an environment in which universities are exposed to unfettered market forces. Such an environment will increase salary differentials and reduce opportunities for continuing employment. Indigenous staff, who are already over-represented in non-continuing and casual appointments (particularly in Indigenous Higher Education Units, where there is an extremely limited student "markets) would find opportunities for continuing employment declining, rather than increasing, in a purely market-driven system.

ENDNOTES

i Breaking the Social Contract: The Fiscal Crisis in Higher Education, RAND-McGraw Hill, 1997

ii Les Andrews, The Effect of HECS on Interest in Undertaking Higher Education, Higher Education Division, DEETYA, 1997

iii Daily Telegraph, London, 2nd December 1997

iv See, for example, Castleman, Allen, Bastalich and Wright, Limited Access: Women's Disadvantage in Higher Education Employment, NTEU, Melbourne, 1995; Blazey, Kemp and Stevens, Waiting in the Wings study of Early Career Academic Researchers, NBEET Commissioned Report No 50, September 1996; J.Collins, The Casualisation of Research Postgraduate Employment, AGPS, Canberra, 1994.

v See, for example, Simon Marginson, 'Where Market Forces Won't Make the Grade', Age, 13th November 1997.

vi M. Baker, F. Robertson. A. Taylor, L. Doube in association with T. Rhall, The Labour Market Effects of Overseas Students, Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research, 1996, p. 94.

vii Higher Education Council 10th Annual report, 1996.

viii National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (Final report), DEET, 1995, cf. pp. 149- 150.