

**Submission
No 3**

**INQUIRY INTO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NSW
TERTIARY EDUCATION SECTOR**

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Generous funding from government and public support for a nation's universities is an indication of the sophistication and progressiveness of a nation. In the past, well-funded universities in NSW provided students with the opportunity to develop creativity, academically, technologically, politically etc. This was because they had the leisure to participate in other university activities besides the purely academic pursuits of their chosen degree. Many of today's humanitarians, artists, and politicians developed their interest and knowledge in these fields while studying unrelated fields at university - because they had the time to do so.

In today's universities, most students appear to be hard-pressed to hold down a job, sometimes full-time, to be able to afford to live, particularly in cities, and still be able to meet their study commitments. There is little or no time to join university organisations or pursue other interests because the cost of accommodation is so high the need to make money can be all-consuming.

When did "the people" of Australia say they wanted to go down the American model of privatising education? This has been imposed on us by government and at the same time the withdrawal of adequate funding of TAFE by successive governments has led to more and more courses of study being funneled into university courses, thus closing an alternate avenue of study for those who cannot afford university or do not want an academically-oriented course of study, but prefer more practical courses.

What a horrible world it would be if all courses of study had to be utilitarian. And how lacking our society would be if students were so consumed with making enough money to pay the rent that they had no time to broaden their minds in other pursuits? Teaching at all levels should be well-paid and highly respected as a measure of the value a nation places on education. Instead, we see academics often being poorly paid and most not even given the security of a permanent job.

How appalling that a rich nation like Australia does not have enough support of tertiary education to produce enough doctors and engineers of our own, but instead imports doctors and engineers from poor, third-world countries which presumably have too many! How bogan we are, or actually, how bogan are our political leaders.