

The Hon Dan Tehan MP
Minister for Education
Parliament House
Canberra, ACT 2600

Date:

To the Minister for Education,

I am writing to you as a member of the Australian Arts and Education community in response to the recent fee increase to university degrees in the Arts and Humanities. The recent 'incentivisation' by decreasing the fees for degrees in the fields of Medicine, Mathematics, Agriculture and IT manipulates the next generation of scholars to devalue the Arts and Humanities sectors, despite their role as a crucial incubator of our national cultural identity.

According to SGS Economics and Planning, the Australian creative industries sector contributes more than \$90 billion dollars to the national economy and exports \$3.2 billion annually. The report initiated by the Creative Industries Innovation Centre at the University of Technology, Sydney, not only demonstrates the investment necessary to support a vibrant and lucrative sector, but 72% of this sector is enjoyed by Australian citizens. The Bureau of Communications and Arts Research (BCAR), further indicates that cultural and creative activity within Australia contributed \$111.7 billion dollars to Australia's economy in 2016-17, a value which has consistently grown by 30% since 2008-09. Further demonstrating the value of skills from these degrees the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching, showed students undertaking study in the Arts are more likely to gain employment than maths and science graduates.

Data from the Academy of Social Services in Australia has further highlighted 66 per cent of federal parliamentarians, 62 per cent of government senior executives and two-thirds of chief executives of the ASX200 listed companies hold degrees in Humanities. Even more telling is the fact that 10 of the 30 prime ministers of Australia to date, have held a Bachelor of Arts degrees.

In closing, I am requesting a response from your office outlining how the changes to the cost of Arts and Humanities degree are justified, given their demonstrated importance in the senior executive roles above. If a response in writing can't be provided, I would still request the fee increases for Arts and Humanities degrees be suspended to encourage more emerging scholars to contribute to the cultural fabric of our nation.

Yours Sincerely,