



*Professional Historians  
Association (Vic & Tas) Inc*

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### **To whom it may concern**

The Professional Historians Association (Victoria & Tasmania) strongly condemns the proposal from the Minister for Education to drastically increase the cost of humanities courses at Australian universities.

The Minister says that these changes are to ensure the 'job readiness' of graduates. We argue that degrees in humanities equip students with the very skills needed for employability in these uncertain times. By undertaking humanities courses, students graduate with abilities in analytical thinking, innovation, complex problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication. These skills are highlighted on the government's own website as those that will be in demand in the near future, as identified most frequently by Australian companies in a recent survey conducted by the World Economic Forum: <https://australianjobs.employment.gov.au/jobs-future/skills-future>

PHA (Vic & Tas) represents over 200 academically trained professionals who work across a range of sectors. Our members are employed in the public service, museums, universities, libraries, archives, as consultants and in heritage. In many cases, humanities graduates are also found in fields such as construction, technology and science, as their abilities provide an essential balance. Historians in particular are well-equipped to guide us as we grapple with the challenges of responding to and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

PHA (Vic & Tas) is also deeply concerned for the financial impact this will have on students. Passing the majority of the cost of a university degree onto the individual student will mean that young people will have to make very difficult choices at a formative time of their lives. In fact, many of our current members would not have been able to study and then make their career in the field of history under this proposed system, as they simply could not have afforded it. We are profoundly troubled that this proposal will mean that humanities degrees (as well as law and commerce) will be accessible only to those who come from wealth and privilege.


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Now more than ever, it is critical that we ensure our history is studied, taught, questioned and communicated by diverse voices and perspectives. These proposed revisions across higher education will limit access to further study and career opportunities, will impose a financial burden on young people, and will impact Australia's standing internationally, as well as our standards here at home.

We call on our representatives in Canberra to create a fair future for the generations to come, and to drastically amend this proposal.

Yours sincerely



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