



The Secretary
Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business
and Education References Committee
Suite S1.61 Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

19 March 2001

Dear Sir,

Please find attached two submissions from The Australia Institute to the Inquiry into the capacity of public universities to meet Australia's higher education needs. These submissions are:

- Kayrooz, C. Kinnear, P., Preston, P. 2001 *Academic freedom and commercialisation of Australian universities: perceptions and experiences of social scientists* Discussion Paper no. 37, The Australia Institute, Canberra
- A document outlining data relating to student standards and fee-paying students (Appendix attached).

The first submission is our recent Discussion Paper (no. 37) that has attracted considerable media attention since January 2001. The report presents the results of a survey of Australian social scientists' perceptions and experiences of academic freedom and the commercialisation of university funding.

The second submission is a document about the issue of full fee-paying students and 'soft-marking' based on data from the study. Although the study did not specifically set out to investigate the issue of student standards and fee-paying students, this document outlines, for the benefit of the Senate Inquiry, the major findings and issues raised by respondents in relation to this matter. The Appendix to this document contains a collection of claims of preference for full fee-paying students that are in the public or semi-public domain. This document and the appendix have been prepared by Clive Hamilton, Executive Director and Pamela Kinnear, Research Fellow (and Acting Executive Director) at the Australia Institute.

The Australia Institute is an independent public policy research centre funded by grants from philanthropic trusts, memberships and commissioned research. Launched in 1994, the Institute's objective is to develop and conduct independent research and

policy analysis and to participate forcefully in public debates. Those involved in the Institute have each, from different viewpoints, been concerned about the impact on Australian society of the priority given to a narrow definition of economic efficiency over community, environmental and ethical considerations in public and private decision making.

We would be pleased to provide any further assistance that we are able to the Inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Dr Pamela Kinnear
Acting Executive Director