

NIDA response - VET Student Loans package feedback

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Education_and_Employment/VET_StudentLoans

Background: Training for employment

The **entertainment industry looks to NIDA graduates when employing practitioners** for a multitude of roles in theatre, film and television production. NIDA graduates are regarded as some of Australia's best.

As a result of NIDA's elite education and training model, **NIDA graduates have a significant impact on the Australian and world stages.** Please find evidence of NIDA's alumni success in the Appendix of this document (p.7).

NIDA began delivering VET diplomas in 2015 after the entertainment industry identified a skills gap. After rigorous consultation with industry the NIDA Diploma of Musical Theatre course was developed, as an industry-facing training course which serves Australia's growing musical theatre sector. NIDA VET curricula are subject to stringent quality assurance measures, articulated through Course Advisory Committees and Academic Board.

NIDA delivers its VET diplomas as fulltime courses. This delivery mode suits students who require the skills and knowledge suitable for industry employment in an expedient timeframe. A **strong industry facing curriculum and the inclusion of industry mentors** alongside qualified teachers in the learning /teaching studios provide the framework for sound employability skills for NIDA's vocational studies students.

NIDA undertakes selection and admissions processes for VET students with rigour and care, with auditions and **interviews for prospective VET students undertaken according to strict industry-focussed admission criteria** for a limited number of places – up to 20 students per cohort in the Diploma of Musical Theatre.

NIDA VET students have access to industry standard facilities, equipment and expert and qualified teaching staff.

Because of NIDA's reputation as a provider of employable practitioners, NIDA VET graduates are eagerly welcomed by the entertainment industry.

NIDA currently has 4 VET diploma level offerings only:

Course	Eligibility for VET Student Loans
Diploma of Musical Theatre	No
Diploma of Live Production and Technical Services	Yes
Diploma of Screen and Media	Yes
Diploma of Stage and Screen Performance	No

NIDA student completion and employability data

- 100% completion rate for the NIDA Diploma of Musical Theatre (DMT) 2015 cohort
- 100% completion rate for the NIDA Diploma of Musical Theatre (DMT) 2016 cohort
- 78% of DMT 2015 cohort have found ongoing or regular employment as performers, or in a related field
- Graduates have worked in productions at the Sydney Opera House and the Victorian Arts Centre, worked in corporate entertainment events, created cabaret performances for Australian and international festivals, worked as entertainers on cruise ships, and worked as educational assistants, supporting qualified teachers in specialist areas
- Musical theatre ensemble performers earn on average \$1,200 per week of which around \$350 goes to the Australian Government in taxes
- Established, more experienced musical theatre performers can earn several times more than an ensemble performer.

Case for the Diploma of Musical Theatre at NIDA: 21st Century Economy – musicals are an important contributor to Australia’s economy

- **\$226 million of new money entering the Victorian economy** though Melbourne’s East End theatres; The Princess, Her Majesty’s, Regent, Comedy, Forum and Athenaeum theatres (Ernst & Young, July 2016)
- **Melbourne’s East End theatres created 3000 jobs** (Ernst & Young, July 2016)
- *Ticketmaster* lists **306 theatrical productions** available in Sydney to May 2017
- *Ticketmaster* lists **264 theatrical productions** available in Melbourne to May 2017
- 38 musical theatre performers, 40 musicians and 28 associated technical crew in *My Fair Lady*, playing at the Sydney Opera House
- ***My Fair Lady* is the largest selling production in the history of the Sydney Opera House**
- At least 15 medium to large scale productions will be active and touring Australia in 2017 - 21
- Asia, particularly China, is a developing market for Australian musical theatre.

Musical theatre skills are identifiable, applied skills that are industry specific

Through annual curriculum reviews validated by industry and through the NIDA Academic Board, course content, delivery methods and assessment events reflect industry practice. Reviews are informed by ongoing consultation with the entertainment professionals to ensure graduates meet specific industry needs and expectations. The skills and knowledge acquired by NIDA Diploma of Musical Theatre graduates are tangible and measurable, and deeply connected to the skills and knowledge required to meet industry standards. This includes skills and knowledge in score reading, singing techniques for musical theatre, aural perception, ensemble singing, solo singing, jazz dance, tap dance, dance partnering and stagecraft; essential embodied life-long learning to support a graduate in a successful and lasting career, and capable of adaptation and change within the entertainment sector.

16 of the 20 current graduating 2016 cohort of the NIDA Diploma of Musical Theatre were invited by theatrical agents /managers for meetings regarding representation – a clear sign the industry values the skills level achieved by NIDA’s musical theatre graduates.

Testimonials from 2015 and 2016 Graduate Surveys

NIDA gave me the training I needed to get into the industry

It has been such a great experience to work in NIDA’s facilities and with students from the other courses

We have such amazing classes with the industry guests that regularly come in

NIDA teachers are incredible as they understand what working in musicals is all about

NIDA's world renowned education and training

- NIDA is recognised as an elite education and training provider, using the conservatoire pedagogical model, governed by a Board of Directors and an Academic Board
- NIDA graduates are instrumental in the sustaining the financial and cultural success of the national and international entertainment industries (please see alumni success stories following)
- NIDA's musical theatre training was implemented Beijing, China, earlier this year as a result of its reputation in industry
- Research shows that the collaboration between NIDA MFA (Directing) students and the NIDA Diploma of Musical Theatre students is a unique and productive employability network
- NIDA qualified musical theatre teachers, with exceptional industry experience, include award winners **Philip Quast** (an Australian who is the only performer to have won London's Olivier Award for best performance in a musical 3 times), director and performer **Jennifer Hagan** (seen recently in the feature film Mad Max Fury Road) and Helpmann Award winning writer, director and performer **Darren Gilshenan** – each of these teachers is a NIDA graduate
- NIDA auditions over 200 candidates for only 20 available places for the Diploma of Musical Theatre
- Auditions are carried out using industry standard practices
- NIDA responsibly provides the industry with the next generation of practitioners
- NIDA training takes place in purpose built facilities: fully equipped theatres, rehearsal studios and music rooms, each requiring specialist equipment such lighting and sound, ballet barres, mirrors, tarket flooring and pianos, providing a learning /teaching environment that reflects contemporary entertainment industry practice

Equity of access

- If NIDA Diploma of Musical Theatre students not able to access VET Student Loans, the course would only be accessible to those able to afford course fees up front, thereby disadvantaging many capable /prospective students
- Fees for the NIDA Diploma of Musical Theatre are \$18,000 as training is face-to-face, and requires multiple teachers to co-deliver sessions (reflecting entertainment industry practice, a repetiteur, choreographer and director work with the students together at the one time)
- NIDA's process of auditioning and interviewing prospective candidates for the 2017 course has already commenced – prior to the announcement on Monday 10 October of the VET Student Loans Eligible Course List, prospective students had notional access to government loans through VET FEE HELP – as the course is not on the list, the students that have begun the interview process are now disadvantaged

Case for the newly accredited Diploma of Stage and Screen Performance at NIDA:

Developing new employment pathways

- **Brought into being as a result of entertainment industry consultation**, this newly created course was accredited by ASQA, and is designed to equip graduates with the skills and knowledge to generate original works utilising new technologies, and to offer graduates options in relation to current /traditional performance employment platforms
- **Providing entry level jobs in a broad range of entertainment industry contexts**, the course allows students to identify the multiplicity of roles, technologies and methodologies that exist within the theatre, film, television and digital industries, giving graduates ability to pursue a diverse range of career pathways
- Partnering with Western Sydney University, NIDA has designed this course to allow students to engage with communities across Western Sydney through collaborative projects which involve researching, creating and presenting the stories of their neighbourhoods through new technologies.

Quality assurance

- 16-18 students (only), will be selected using industry modelled criteria
- **ASQA accredited the course earlier in 2016** as a result of a detailed submission, which included information on industry need for the course and on its aims to equip graduates with pathways to employment.

Feedback on the cap of a \$10,000 loan for courses from the Creative Arts and Culture Training Package:

Each student who successfully completes the NIDA Diploma of Musical Theatre has the potential to contribute significantly to the Australian economy and represent Australia in international theatrical contexts.

NIDA seeks to identify the criteria used for setting the loan cap at \$10,000 for diplomas in the Creative Arts and Culture Package.

As an example:

Given the contribution musical theatre makes to the national economy, NIDA sees the \$15,000 cap (and not the \$10,000 cap) as more reasonable.

Concluding remarks

In his recent address opening the Drama Australia Conference in Adelaide on 29 September 2016, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, Minister for Education and Training, noted the 'importance of drama in the overall structure of education in Australia, enriching the lives of young Australians – ensuring they have a satisfying future'. Research demonstrates that along with graduates from the other ARTS8 organisations such as the Australian Ballet School, NIDA VET graduates are ready to take up employment opportunities nationally and internationally.

NIDA understands that the entertainment industry can only absorb a limited number of graduates each year. NIDA is best placed to provide the entertainment industry with graduates from VET and Higher Education programs.

Careful selection of a limited number of students, academic rigour, compliance with standards and expert tuition in purpose built facilities ensures NIDA is able to provide the Australian Government with certainty that courses are credible and industry focussed, with identified employability outcomes for graduates.

Both the Diploma of Musical Theatre and the ASQA accredited, industry required, Diploma of Stage and Screen Performance will graduate a limited number of students to ensure the entertainment industries have the best possibility to evolve, and to continue to contribute to the well-being of Australia's economy.

NIDA students in these courses need to have access to VET Student Loans to ensure that students from all social backgrounds have the opportunity to participate. If students in these two courses are not able to access VET Student Loans, selection will be limited to fewer, financially privileged candidates.

The entertainment industry will perpetuate a culture of privilege, missing out on the contributions of those that cannot afford to pay for their education and training up front.

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NIDA

Appendix

NIDA Alumni on the national and world stage and screen

Please see below, links to recent media articles, as examples of NIDA graduates in work. NIDA is able to meet entertainment industry employer needs by providing graduates who are industry ready.

- Fairfax – Richard Roxburgh (Acting, 1986)
<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/books/richard-roxburgh-pens-childrens-book-artie-and-the-grime-gang-out-of-love-for-his-sons-20160906-gra2bn>
- The Lifted Brow – Clemmie Williams (Directing, 2016)
<http://theliftebrow.com/post/151353346722/opera-means-work-saving-the-artform-from>
- News Corp – Cate Blanchett (Acting, 1992)
<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/big-time-actors-who-started-their-lives-in-melbourne/news-story/f45c40a27b48be991e885c0f4a7809dd?login=1>
- WAtoday – Simon McLachlan (Singer Dancer Actor, 2004)
<http://www.watoday.com.au/act-news/canberra-life/boys-in-the-band-sing-pop-and-rock-hits-at-the-q-20160930-grsmtk.html>
- AussieTheatre – The Corinthian Food Store Collective
<http://aussietheatre.com.au/reviews/mine-corinthian-food-store-collective>
- Tweed Daily News – Yael Stone (Acting, 2006)
<http://www.tweeddailynews.com.au/news/bloodied-waters-run-deep-sbss-new-crime-mini-serie/3097404/>
- The Australian – Craig Pearce (Acting, 1984), Baz Luhrmann (Acting, 1985) & Catherine Martin (Design, 1988)
<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/film/baz-luhrmann-cocreator-craig-pearce-invisible-no-longer/news-story/ac55410b5c6407f9e9dac1fd64a2d458?csp=9587547e5acc36000f6bc41035562226>
- News Corp (print & online) – Mel Gibson (Acting, 1977)
<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/entertainment/sydney-confidential/mel-gibson-director-walks-the-red-carpet-at-sydney-premier-of-hacksaw-ridge/news-story/147f589162da8bca2bcb9954105a9405>
- The Australian – Ryan Corr (Acting, 2009)
<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/review/ryan-corr-scores-role-in-mel-gibsons-hacksaw-ridge/news-story/0a71f9725c2823c9f48835b27f9cceed?csp=71025e9c0795e6375190c77ac4012bcd>
- News Corp (print & online) – Ben Barber (Acting, 2009)
<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/lifestyle/stellardo-real-men-cry-how-redefining-masculinity-is-helping-save-lives/news-story/6b69bb8f04cda32efb6309a1cda8de51?csp=5c054a8cc9191d35c81b65d8c9354da6>
- News Corp – Rob Collins (Acting, 2013) & Jessica Marais (Acting, 2007)
<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/entertainment/sydney-confidential/rob-found-the-recipe-for-tv-chef/news-story/5289134e29d79fc30ec1f7131eb477d7>
- Daily Mail Australia – Miranda Tapsell (Acting, 2008)

- <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-3833451/Indigenous-actress-Miranda-Tapsell-speaks-lack-diversity-currently-Australian-TV-screens.html>
- Fairfax – Karen Vickery (Acting, 1983)
<http://www.smh.com.au/act-news/canberra-life/theatre-the-normal-heart-at-the-courtyard-studio-deals-with-aids-and-love-20161007-grx3s4.html>
- The Music - Jen Cloher (Acting, 1995)
<http://themusic.com.au/music/livereviews/2016/10/15/jen-cloher-newtown-social-club-samantha-jonscher/>
- TV WEEK – David Berry (Acting, 2010)
<http://www.tvweeklogieawards.com.au/news/articles/2016/10/why-a-place-to-call-homes-david-berry-is-the-next-big-thing/>
- Fairfax – Michael Scott-Mitchell
<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/stage/switzerland-review-murraysmith-psychological-thriller-is-her-best-yet-20160922-grm0c7.html>
<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/entertainment/stage/switzerland-review-murraysmith-psychological-thriller-is-her-best-yet-20160922-grm0c7.html>
- The Music – Michael Scott-Mitchell
<http://themusic.com.au/arts/reviews/2016/09/22/switzerland-sumner-theatre-bryget-chrisfield/>
- Australian Stage – Michael Scott-Mitchell
<http://www.australianstage.com.au/201609227981/reviews/melbourne/switzerland-%7C-melbourne-theatre-company.html>
- WAtoday – Colin Friels (Acting, 1976)
<http://www.watoday.com.au/entertainment/colin-friels-is-one-of-australias-most-iconic-actors-just-dont-tell-him-that-20160817-gquxfv.html>
- BroadwayWorld.com – Stephen Sewell, Zebastian Hunter & Stephanie Howe
<http://www.broadwayworld.com/australia-melbourne/article/National-Institute-of-Circus-Arts-Presents-EMPTY-BODIES-20160815>
- News.com.au – Miranda Tapsell & Meyne Wyatt
<http://www.news.com.au/entertainment/tv/why-tv-stars-like-miranda-tapsell-and-marta-dusseldorp-are-going-back-to-the-stage-and-theatre/news-story/3ba607dd2280368ba68c5c96c91262d4>
The Daily Telegraph (print & online) –
<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/entertainment/television/why-tv-stars-like-miranda-tapsell-and-marta-dusseldorp-are-going-back-to-the-stage-and-theatre/news-story/3ba607dd2280368ba68c5c96c91262d4?csp=546b46eb49114677bdfea226c47d5bc7>
Herald Sun – <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/entertainment/television/why-tv-stars-like-miranda-tapsell-and-marta-dusseldorp-are-going-back-to-the-stage-and-theatre/news-story/3ba607dd2280368ba68c5c96c91262d4>
- Daily Mail Australia – Miranda Tapsell
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-3750484/You-learn-Love-Child-star-Miranda-Tapsell-reveals-s-going-stage-theatre.html>
- The Sydney Morning Herald – Tony Llewellyn-Jones
<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/musicals/my-fair-lady-60th-anniversary-staging-has-tony-llewellynjones-as-pickering-20160713-gq4q39.html>
WAtoday – <http://www.watoday.com.au/entertainment/musicals/my-fair-lady-60th-anniversary-staging-has-tony-llewellynjones-as-pickering-20160713-gq4q39.html>

- Brisbane Times – <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/entertainment/musicals/my-fair-lady-60th-anniversary-staging-has-tony-llewellynjones-as-pickering-20160713-gq4q39>
- The West Australian (print & online) – Matt Dyktynski
<https://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/entertainment/a/32373094/clinton-the-musical-in-perth/>
- Townsville Bulletin – James Raggatt
<http://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/entertainment/competitions/win-one-of-twenty-double-passes-to-see-shakespeare-under-the-stars-production-of-hamlet-in-queens-gardens/news-story/2b19c76f0d464e8201b48353d3e11e14>
- SBS News – Shari Sebbens
<http://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/2016/08/17/major-film-productions-provide-training-indigenous-creatives>
- Yahoo! New Zealand – Mel Gibson
<https://nz.lifestyle.yahoo.com/entertainment/celebrity/a/32370748/mel-gibson-tells-sam-armytage-i-miss-australia/#play>
- BroadwayWorld.com – Stephen Sewell, Zebastian Hunter & Stephanie Howe
<http://www.broadwayworld.com/australia-melbourne/article/National-Institute-of-Circus-Arts-Presents-EMPTY-BODIES-20160815>
- News.com.au – Miranda Tapsell & Meyne Wyatt
<http://www.news.com.au/entertainment/tv/why-tv-stars-like-miranda-tapsell-and-marta-dusseldorp-are-going-back-to-the-stage-and-theatre/news-story/3ba607dd2280368ba68c5c96c91262d4>
- The Daily Telegraph (print & online) –
<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/entertainment/television/why-tv-stars-like-miranda-tapsell-and-marta-dusseldorp-are-going-back-to-the-stage-and-theatre/news-story/3ba607dd2280368ba68c5c96c91262d4?csp=546b46eb49114677bdfea226c47d5bc7>
- Herald Sun – <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/entertainment/television/why-tv-stars-like-miranda-tapsell-and-marta-dusseldorp-are-going-back-to-the-stage-and-theatre/news-story/3ba607dd2280368ba68c5c96c91262d4>
- Daily Mail Australia – Miranda Tapsell
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-3750484/You-learn-Love-Child-star-Miranda-Tapsell-reveals-s-going-stage-theatre.html>
- The Sydney Morning Herald – Tony Llewellyn-Jones
<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/musicals/my-fair-lady-60th-anniversary-staging-has-tony-llewellynjones-as-pickering-20160713-gq4q39.html>
- The West Australian (print & online) – Matt Dyktynski
<https://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/entertainment/a/32373094/clinton-the-musical-in-perth/>
- Townsville Bulletin – James Raggatt
<http://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/entertainment/competitions/win-one-of-twenty-double-passes-to-see-shakespeare-under-the-stars-production-of-hamlet-in-queens-gardens/news-story/2b19c76f0d464e8201b48353d3e11e14>
- SBS News – Shari Sebbens
<http://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/2016/08/17/major-film-productions-provide-training-indigenous-creatives>
- Yahoo! New Zealand – Mel Gibson
<https://nz.lifestyle.yahoo.com/entertainment/celebrity/a/32370748/mel-gibson-tells-sam-armytage-i-miss-australia/#play>

- Gay News Network – Kurt Phelan
<http://gaynewsnetwork.com.au/entertainment/music-2/cabaret-showcase-to-bring-out-rare-side-of-kurt-phelan-21803.html>
- Tasmanian Times– Michael Dahlstrom, Andy Cunningham, Sarah-Jane Mcallan and Augusta Miller
<http://tasmaniantimes.com/index.php?/arts-article/provocative-doco-on-the-ethics-of-animal-farming-ge/>
- IF – Michael Dahlstrom, Andy Cunningham, Sarah-Jane Mcallan and Augusta Miller
<http://if.com.au/2016/08/12/article/Animal-welfare-doc-The-Animal-Condition-set-for-theatrical-run-via-Fan-Force/DSLMDJFRQV.html>
- Central Coast Gosford Express Advocate – Leisi Edmonds
<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/central-coast/wyoming-studio-accredited-to-run-diploma-in-musical-theatre/news-story/6f31b603d124876ca2911322760b6510>
- Scenestr – Julian Curtis
<http://scenestr.com.au/arts/true-west-tests-two-brothers>
- Sydney Morning Herald – Mel Gibson
<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/movies/mel-gibson-you-get-barking-mad-in-your-50s-20160802-qqiz5l.html>
- The Australian (print & online) – Kip Williams
<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/stage/fillin-stc-director-kip-williams-might-stick-around-longer/news-story/f67b5e0e1e3fd85219009f49b4ed42e0>
- BroadwayWorld.com – Kip Williams
<http://www.broadwayworld.com/sydney/article/STC-Appoints-Kip-Williams-as-Interim-Artistic-Director-20160803>
- Eastern Report – Tyler Coppin
<http://www.communitynews.com.au/eastern-reporter/lifestyle/tyler-coppins-live-theatre-love-as-little-shop-of-horrors-opens-in-perth/>
- The Lifted Brow – Candy Bowers
<http://theliftebrow.com/post/148465643257/gone-daddy-gone-brown-girl-seeking-by-candy>
- Hills News (print & online) – Paige Gardiner
<http://www.hillsnews.com.au/story/4070444/the-tale-of-three-sisters/>
- Brisbane Times – Baz Luhrmann
<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/entertainment/tv-and-radio/baz-20160801-gqi5vc.html>
- The Advertiser (print & online) – Bridie Carter & Sonia Todd
<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/simple-image-inspired-longrunning-south-australian-tv-series-mcleods-daughters/news-story/ffeac76f6050ab01c26633749fbc340?csp=cfa1c8495fee4a56b3104c35a3b930b0>
- Hush Hush Biz – Julian Curtis
<http://hushhushbiz.com/spotlight-qa-actor-julian-curtis/>
- Screen Australia – Shari Sebbens
<http://www.screenaustralia.gov.au/sa/newsroom/news/2016/mr-160801-indigenous-department-celebrates-attachm>
- ForeignAffairs.co.nz – Shari Sebbens
<http://foreignaffairs.co.nz/2016/08/01/screen-australias-indigenous-department-supports-10-indigenous-attachments-on-thor-ragnarok-and-alien-covenant/>
- Sydney Morning Herald (print & online) – Genevieve Blanchett

- <http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/opera/genevieve-blanchett-maintains-family-tradition-of-creativity-20160726-gqe60q.html>
- The Telegraph (UK) – Baz Luhrmann
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/on-demand/2016/07/30/king-of-cinema-baz-luhrmann-on-taking-over-netflix-fatherhood-an/>
 - TV Tonight – John Howard
<http://www.tvtonight.com.au/2016/08/career-still-greener-for-actor-john-howard.html>
 - Scenestr – Justin Stewart-Cotta
<http://scenestr.com.au/arts/sport-for-jove-is-lost-in-chekhov-translation>
 - Sydney Morning Herald – Actor Keith Robinson’s return to the spotlight
<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/theatre/twelfth-20160718-gg83if.html>
 - Business Acumen Magazine – Mentor LA program
<http://www.businessacumen.biz/index.php/65-news/creative-industries/1931-bold-mentor-la-program-to-boost-careers.html>
 - The Futon Critic – Benedict Samuel joins *Gotham*
<http://www.thefutoncritic.com/news/2016/07/18/benedict-samuel-joins-gotham-as-jervis-tetch-mad-hatter-834211/20160718fox01/>
 - Miranda Tapsell
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-07-15/actress-miranda-tapsell-on-resilience-and-diversity/7629718>