

Inquiry: The Higher Education Support Amendment (Reverse Job-Ready Graduates Fee Hikes and End 50k Arts Degrees) Bill 2025 .

Submission to:

Committee Secretary
Senate Education and Employment Committees
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Submitter Details:

Suzanne Rogers,
Aka: Artist, Raichbhe Walkman
Victoria

Greetings Committee Secretary,

I write to encourage the reduction of fees, to support reverse job-ready graduates Fee.

I am an Australian artist who, although not completely self-funding yet, I have a small sole business and actively use my art for monetization.

Although the scheme was designed to steer students toward STEM, education and health by making arts degrees significantly more expensive it has not noted that many STEM skills are required to create art from basic knowledge of math to measure and lines of perspective, through to chemistry in R&D for things like fabric made from mushrooms. Art was once grouped with science because of this. The scheme reduces the Arts education to the wealthy or to high & long term HECS debts.

It is frustrating that Art is not supported, recognised or highly valued in Australia.

Arts assist everyone in all areas of life. From the clothes and accessories people wear, the food we eat, the architecture and decoration of the environment we live and work in; the enjoyment of books, music, murals, movies, education materials, community connection, mental health, philosophy and critical thinking, AI (and we all know how AI stole peoples art, esp. written works, for its development) ... the list goes on. But it is often a low-income environment in Australia. Very few make a living from their Art here compared to other countries like Belgium, Ireland, UAE, Panama, USA, Germany, Canada, UK, Sweden, France. Socially, it is looked down on in Australia. This is not assisted by making the education expensive with \$50 000 degrees.

I recently returned to education to further my art skills in a new direction to advance avenues for income. A Certificate IV was affordable but even the next step in skill development, and only a diploma, is more expensive (\$22 000) than a degree in maths (\$13 881)!!!. [Insert many expletives here]. I can not afford that, especially as a diploma does not fall under HECS, is ineligible for financial assistance. The Arts diploma includes business skills – which would greatly assist me becoming self-supporting. Instead, the cost of further education is prohibitive. I don't have that money spare and in the current cost of living problems, I can not afford to take on debt via a bank loan.

Any efforts by the current government to reduce the cost of education would be greatly appreciated

Thank you for your time, thank you for reading

Suzanne,

aka Artist: Raichbhe Walkman