

Students punished for following their passions

May 26

The Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities is calling for urgent fee reform within the higher education sector given damning statistics released today.

Four in five of last year's high school graduates have said passion is their leading influence when choosing a degree, proving the previous government's attempts to drive enrolment numbers using fee increases has not worked.

81 per cent of the nearly 14,000 Year 12 students interviewed for the report said passion would guide their choices for further study.

The Universities Admission Centre Student Lifestyle Report shows only 35 per cent of students consider the cost of education when choosing their degree, and only about 40 per cent consider employment outcomes.

These statistics fly in the face of the face of claims fee increases would guide student preferences under the former Government's 'Job Ready Graduates Package'.

It now costs more than \$14,000 per year to study an Arts Degree in Australia, \$3,000 more than it costs to study medicine or dentistry under the policy introduced in 2020 and implemented this year.

DASSH is calling for university fee reform given the total lack of evidence that this clumsy attempt to guide student preferences away from humanities, arts and social sciences degrees is working.

'Job Ready Graduates' have Arts Degrees, with research commissioned by DASSH showing two thirds of the overall workforce have a humanities, arts and social sciences education.

It's time for the price of university courses to reflect the cost of delivery, not a political agenda.

President Catharine Coleborne

Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities