



EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

The Parliament of Victoria's Education and Training Committee is conducting an *Inquiry into Geographic Differences in the Rate in which Victorian Students Participate in Higher Education...or...*

'Does where you live affect whether you go to uni?'

The voices of past, current and potential university and TAFE students are important, so the Committee needs to hear your views.



What is a Parliamentary Inquiry?

Committees are groups of Members of Parliament (MPs) appointed to investigate specific issues (like teacher training, harmful alcohol use or bushfires). These investigations are called *Parliamentary Inquiries*.

A committee gathers evidence by asking the community and experts to share their views on the *Terms of Reference*, a list of the topics the inquiry must cover. People can comment in writing (*a submission*), or in person at a *public hearing*.

After considering the evidence the Committee writes a report and makes recommendations to the Government about what should be done. The Government doesn't *have* to do what the report recommends, but it *does* think carefully about how to respond—so inquiries help the Government to make informed decisions with input from the community.

Contributing to a parliamentary inquiry is a way for all Victorians, including students and young people, to influence Government decisions and make a genuine difference.

How can I get involved?

Get writing! The easiest way you can contribute to a parliamentary inquiry is by making a written submission. Your submission can be as short or long as you like; contain fact, opinion or both; and deal with one topic covered by the inquiry or all of them.

Your submission will be published on the Committee's website, and will become part of the permanent public record of the inquiry. Your voice will become part of Victoria's parliamentary history.

There are some questions on the other side of this page to give you some ideas....

How can I get others involved?

If you are a staff member or student representative, here are some ideas to involve others at your university or TAFE institute in this inquiry:

- Publicise the inquiry to your university or TAFE community by displaying or distributing this information sheet or by mentioning the inquiry in your student magazine. An electronic copy is available on the Committee website.
- Ask your student union or student association to put together a submission representing the views of students.
- Put together a submission with interested or relevant university/TAFE business units such as an equity unit, accommodation service or counselling service.

For more information visit the Committee's website at: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/etc or contact the friendly Committee staff on etc@parliament.vic.gov.au or (03) 8682 2823.

Submissions for this inquiry will be accepted throughout 2008.



Does where you live affect whether you go to uni?

This material is designed to help you prepare a submission to the Education and Training Committee's *Inquiry into Geographic Differences in the Rate in which Victorian Students Participate in Higher Education*.

Option 1: Key Research Questions

The questions below set out the issues the Education and Training Committee will be exploring in the inquiry. Your submission may address as many of these as you wish; a thoughtful response to a few questions is sometimes better than trying to cover them all.

Are students from different geographic areas (eg regions, suburbs, or localities) in Victoria...

... more or less likely to apply for university?

... more or less likely to receive or accept university offers?

... more or less likely to complete a university course once they enrol?

Is this because students from different geographic areas...

... stay at school for longer, or leave earlier?

... choose different subjects or courses at school?

... choose different post-school pathways (eg TAFE, apprenticeships, or employment)?

... have greater or fewer university campuses/courses available in their community?

... are affected by other factors, such as economic, social or cultural issues?

What effect does going to university (or not) have on...

... students from different geographic areas in Victoria?

... their families and communities?

... skills shortages and the Victorian economy?

What could be done to address any barriers to university participation for students from different geographic areas?

Option 2: Tell us your story...

The Education and Training Committee would like to know how things happen in *your* community and, if you are currently studying, at your university or TAFE. Think about your own story and other people you know. The following questions might give you some ideas.

How does where you're from affect your experience of student life and your success as a student?

What are the aspirations of people from your community? How important is education to them?

What routes do people from your community take into university (eg. straight from school, from TAFE, through a preparatory course)?

Is it common in your community for students to defer university study? Why or why not?

What are the financial, academic, social and other challenges associated with study for people from your community?

What support do universities, TAFE, the government and others provide? How effective is it, and what else would help students to complete their studies?

Would increased access to education affect your community? How?

What needs to happen so that all Victorians have educational opportunities, regardless of where they live?

Submissions may be posted to The Executive Officer, Education and Training Committee, Parliament House, Spring Street, EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002, or emailed to etc@parliament.vic.gov.au. Further information, including official Terms of Reference, can be found at www.parliament.vic.gov.au/etc/.