



Stakeholders and power in Australian universities

Trudi Cooper,
Australian Learning and Teaching Fellow
Edith Cowan University, Australia

This presentation

- Overview of **stakeholders** in Australian higher education
- How they wield power
- OLT Fellowship: *Achieving economic sustainability for niche social profession courses in the Australian higher education sector - a nationwide collaborative strategy*



Australian Government

Department of Education and Training

- Support for this project has been provided by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government Department of Education and Training

Stakeholders

- Students
- Employers
- Professional Associations
- Peaks and Policy Advisory bodies
- Universities
- Universities Australia
- Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency
- Federal government

Stakeholders and source of power

- **Students** -decide which course to enrol in
- **Employers** -may decide not to employ graduates unless professionally qualified
- **Professional associations** -endorse or accredit courses. Powerful associations apply political pressure to ensure courses are well-funded
- **Peaks** -lobby groups, indirect power
- **Universities** - decide what courses to offer
- **Universities Australia** -lobby organisation for University Vice-Chancellors
- **Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency** -government funded independent body that audits university quality within the framework set by government
- **Federal government** -sets policy framework and funding, 'steers at a distance'

Loss of specialist professional education

- Loss of **choice** for students
- Lack of **skilled staff** for employer
 - Skills met through migration
 - Cost of additional training borne by employer
 - Low skill workforce and threat to quality of service provision
- Loss of **leadership** to adapt to future change
- **Poor employment prospects** for generic graduates who lack specialist skills

Why social need is important

- Social policy needs specialist knowledge for leadership
- **Disability:** National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS); Closing the Gap; Community support; Supporting carers; normalisation;
 - **Aging:** Royal Commission into Aged Care; Aging-in-place Age Care Policy; Dementia friendly communities; Supporting carers; integrated support and community care packages;
 - **Youth work:** Youth Justice Reinvestment; Countering Violent Extremism; Closing the Gap; overcoming effects of trauma; youth employment; homelessness prevention; youth suicide prevention; holistic mental health support;
 - Incentives are effective in encouraging students to enrol in subjects of need

Contact

A/ Prof Trudi Cooper PhD

Edith Cowan University

Social Program Research and Evaluation (SPIRE)

+61 (08) 6304-5637 Work

+61 (0) 431734519 Mobile

t.cooper@ecu.edu.au

270, Joondalup Drive

Joondalup WA 6027