

# Free Minds, Free Futures: Fixing Australia's Broken University System

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## Higher Education Should Lift Us Up — Not Weigh Us Down

For generations, Australians believed that education was a ladder: the more you climbed, the more you could achieve. But today, that ladder has become a burden. Students and graduates are burdened by tens of thousands of dollars in HECS and HELP debt. Young Australians are delaying families, careers, and even leaving the country—all to escape a debt that should never have existed.

We believe it's time to return to a system that puts Australians first.

In the Division of Moreton, we live beside one of Australia's most prestigious universities. UQ is a world-class institution, and a major employer in the region. But many of its graduates leave with debt, not dignity. Many of its students are under financial pressure just to keep attending. And many local residents feel they've been forgotten by a university system that increasingly caters to profit over people.

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## A New Approach to Higher Education

We believe education should be a pathway to opportunity, not a lifetime financial sentence. The Trumpet of Patriots supports the following reforms to fix what's broken:

- 1. Forgive all existing HECS/HELP debt.**  
Remove the financial burden that has weighed down generations of Australians. Forgiving student debt will inject new life into the economy, improve access to housing by increasing borrowing power and easing rental pressure, and let young people move forward with confidence.
- 2. Make university free for Australian citizens.**  
Bring back publicly funded higher education for locals. Remove tuition fees and restore equal access to opportunity for all, regardless of background.
- 3. Double international student fees.**  
Redirect revenue from international enrolments to fully fund domestic places. International students should pay a fair share to support our public institutions.
- 4. Refocus universities on public service.**  
Encourage institutions to serve the national interest: educating citizens, training professionals, and building Australia's workforce—not solely focused on global rankings or international enrolments.
- 5. Reinvest in university staffing and research.**  
Ensure public funding supports teaching quality, research, and long-term national priorities—not just administrative growth or short-term expansion.

### **What Kind of Country Do We Want to Be?**

We believe education should liberate people, not trap them in debt.

This is more than an economic issue—it's a national values test. Do we believe in a country where working-class kids get the same chance as the privileged? Do we believe in a future where learning leads to freedom—not lifelong debt?

I believe we do.

The current system is broken. It's time to fix it.

Let's stop placing barriers in front of Australians who want to learn. Let's start building a future where higher education is a right, not a risk.

**Let's free the next generation.**