

# CAPA Policy 2011

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## About the CAPA policy document

This section is provided to assist the reader in understand the context in which CAPA Policy exists, how it is created, modified and removed, and how it works (the following represents an introductory preface only, and does not itself include any policy items).

### 1. POLICY

Policy is a statement of **aims, values** or **principles** of the organisation. As it is set by a majority of Constituent Organisations, it might further be considered a statement of principles of Postgraduate Student Associations (PGSAs) generally.

According to the CAPA Constitution, Policy may:

*be added, modified, or removed by a simple resolution of the Council (subsection 24(2)).*

This means that Policy applies until such time as the Council removes it. Policy is set by resolution of Council, whether at an Annual Council Meeting, Special Council Meeting or by a referendum. Where such policy exists, it is considered binding on the Executive and the Council, as well as the organisation. Policy does not necessarily direct the organisation, but the organisation is bound to follow it. It is not considered binding on PGSAs – **CAPA has no power to direct its members**. Policy may recommend PGSAs follow a certain course of action. Executive may set policy that the Policy Document does not cover, but it is not a part of this Policy Document.

Any element of CAPA Policy that is inconsistent with another, later, element of Policy, is superseded by the later element. The CAPA Constitution states:

*In the instance of inconsistent policy, the more recent policy shall be deemed operative, and the other policy shall be struck (subsection 24(4)).*

Finally, according to the Regulation subsection 11.4.2.4, the National Secretary has the responsibility to:

*Edit the CAPA Policy Document to ensure consistency of language and numeration and to provide cross-referencing of related policies.*

### 2. GENERAL RESOLUTIONS

General Resolutions are a statement of principle by Council, often on a particular matter. General Resolutions do not bind the Council or the Executive, and are superseded at the ACM following their adoption. General Resolutions are not properly a part of the Policy Document, but are included as an addendum to highlight the feelings of the Council in a given year on a given issue. General Resolutions tend to be situational, and may be passed in consecutive years.

It is important to note that CAPA Policy and General Resolutions cannot override the CAPA Constitution. If an item of Policy were in contradiction of a statement within the Constitution, the Constitution's statement has precedence.

# 1 Higher Education Principles

## 1.1 Role of Higher Education

- 1.1.1 CAPA believes Australia's tertiary education system is a major national resource. It provides individuals and communities with access to knowledge through teaching; scholarship and research; and assists in the training of a highly skilled workforce. As such, tertiary education makes a vital contribution to Australia's economic development.
- 1.1.2 CAPA recognises the role of tertiary education in forming ethical and critical capacities in the population, and the significance of the Humanities in particular in this role. CAPA believes that the tertiary education system has a responsibility for nurturing public intellectuals so that the community directly participates in and benefits from the knowledge generation process. CAPA believes that individuals in the tertiary education system also have a responsibility to comment upon issues of national and international importance, recognising that such commentary is an important aspect of the nurturing of public intellectuals and of the contribution of tertiary education to Australian society.
- 1.1.3 CAPA believes that the tertiary education system must be free, secular, diverse, democratic, socially accountable, and publicly funded and controlled, recognising that the public system is the most appropriate means of delivering educational services based on the principles of social equity and academic freedom.
- 1.1.4 CAPA believes that quality, equity and diversity are the cornerstones of a healthy Australian system of education, particularly of higher education. As such, CAPA believes that tertiary education should be a broad-based system encompassing the preservation, transmission and extension of knowledge for its own sake, the development of critical capacities and reasoning in an environment of vigorous academic freedom, and which actively fosters the development of abilities to challenge the status quo of one's society.
- 1.1.5 CAPA is opposed to a higher education system whose focus is narrow short-term economic objectives, industry goals and vocational training.
- 1.1.6 CAPA believes that Higher Education should be freely available to all eligible people regardless of their physical location.

## 1.2 Funding for Higher Education

### 1.2.1 Public Investment

- 1.2.1.1 CAPA believes that society enjoys a considerable social, cultural and economic benefit from higher education and that this education should be free and accessible to all. The most equitable means of financing higher education is a progressive taxation system. Funding of higher education in this manner will assist in shifting the burden of funding away from those groups whose access to post secondary education is most restricted. In order to ensure accountability for this public investment CAPA believes that the higher education policy process should be open and consultative.
- 1.2.1.2 CAPA believes that the Federal Government should increase its commitment to funding of the public tertiary education sector to:

- (a) provide access to all Australians with the capacity to participate at higher education level;
- (b) guarantee access to higher education for identified equity groups; and
- (c) support a diverse higher education system by recognising the different funding requirements of universities depending on their region, mission and structure.

1.2.1.3 CAPA condemns continuing moves by the Federal Government, State Governments and universities to privatise and commercialise universities' core activities -- teaching, learning and research -- because such moves legitimise and institutionalise the view that education is a commodity.

1.2.1.4 CAPA condemns the various reforms to the public higher education system put forward to Parliament and Senate as a result of the 'Nelson Review' and believes those financial, legislative, regulatory and discretionary measures currently proposed by the Federal Government represent in their entirety an unworkable, punitive, regressive and inequitable set of reforms which fails to address both the ongoing funding crisis of the sector and the values upon which our public University system is based .

1.2.1.5 CAPA welcomes the recommendations of the Employment, Workplace Relations and Education References Committee contained in Hacking Australia's Future: to institutional autonomy, academic freedom and student choice in Australian higher education.

1.2.1.6 CAPA condemns performance-based funding as a mechanism for funding universities.

## **1.2.2 Private Sector Contributions**

1.2.3 CAPA believes that the private sector, as a major beneficiary of the tertiary education sector, should increase its contribution to funding of the sector, supplementing but not replacing the level of government funding.

1.2.4 CAPA believes that this commitment should be in the form of a compulsory industry levy, following OECD models such as those in France and Sweden. However, such levies should only be implemented if the funds are substantially directed to publicly funded institutions, not private providers.

## 2 Higher Education Teaching and Research

### 2.1 General Education Policy

#### 2.1.1 Flexible Delivery and Open Learning

2.1.1.1 CAPA believes that changes in the character of the labour market including:

- (a) increased competition for jobs;
- (b) higher demand for postgraduate qualifications as a requirement for entry and/or progress in specialised labour markets;
- (c) the drive for greater flexibility in employment;
- (d) the fragmentation of long-term career opportunities; and
- (e) the growing call for retraining opportunities have raised the pressure on universities to introduce more flexible forms of delivery of higher education, including at postgraduate levels.

2.1.1.2 CAPA offers in principle support for flexible delivery initiatives in education which have embraced the expansion of course work awards, the growth of alternative modes of delivery such as part-time and external study and the increased use of open learning techniques. One effect of increasing flexibility of delivery is to expand access to postgraduate education for groups otherwise excluded from postgraduate study.

2.1.1.3 While generally supportive of the development of more flexible modes of delivery, CAPA is nevertheless concerned that the quality of many of these new initiatives has been undermined by inadequate resource support for the maintenance and delivery of programs and by the lack of attention paid to the construction of teaching and learning methodologies best suited to flexible modes of delivery. CAPA is particularly concerned with the potential for flexible delivery to offer institutions the opportunity to expand their fee-paying base.

2.1.1.4 CAPA contends that the developments of flexible methods of delivery should not be treated by education providers as a 'cut-price' option for the provision of postgraduate education. All modes of delivery must be driven by comparable attention to quality assurance. CAPA believes that a genuine concern with 'equivalence' in quality across modes of study should assist in reducing barriers to transfer between postgraduate programs, further enhancing both access and flexibility.

2.1.1.5 CAPA opposes the commercialisation and privatisation of alternative modes of education delivery, in particular, the Open and Resource-Based Learning Initiatives. CAPA believes that this commercialisation and privatisation will adversely impact on the quality of teaching and course delivery.

#### 2.1.2 Intellectual Property

2.1.2.1 CAPA believes that institutional intellectual property Policy should encourage an environment in which teaching, learning and research will flourish and that institutions should adhere to the principle that knowledge and ideas should be made available within the public domain for the benefit of the entire community. Where this principle conflicts with commercial considerations, the institution should resolve the conflict to ensure publication without undue delay, having regard to the wishes of the originator.

- 2.1.2.2 CAPA asserts that students have a legitimate right to ownership of any intellectual property developed in the course of their studies, including the development of new course materials and new ideas, and any revenue generated as a result of the exploitation of this property. CAPA rejects the claim that universities may have a claim to the ownership of intellectual property developed by their students. Further, CAPA asserts that the moral rights of students in relation to intellectual property cannot be waived by any agreement a student may make with any other body in relation to intellectual property. CAPA recognises that these issues are of particular importance to postgraduate research students and those students who are part-time teachers.
- 2.1.2.3 CAPA believes that in order to best protect the interests of postgraduate students, institutions must have an intellectual property policy which deals specifically with the intellectual property generated by students. CAPA endorses the CAPA policy statement "student ownership of intellectual property and the moral rights of authors", which it shall promote as CAPA policy. CAPA believes that institutional intellectual property policy should:
- (a) be developed in consultation with all stakeholders, including staff, union and students;
  - (b) recognise the fundamental differences between staff and students, in that students are not employees of the University;
  - (c) provide mechanisms to ensure that students who sign agreements in relation to intellectual property do so with informed consent;
  - (d) ensure that students are informed of the intellectual property arrangements for a research project prior to their joining the project;
  - (e) include a pro-forma agreement between the institution, the research workers and any other partners for commercially sponsored research;
  - (f) require that students' contributions to articles, lectures and seminar materials be acknowledged;
  - (g) state the maximum time that a research publication may be embargoed because of commercial interests. CAPA believes that this time should be no longer than twelve months, and wherever possible, six; and
  - (h) ensure that specific reference is made to the relevant Code of Conduct for Research (or equivalent) and state that the policy is to be read in conjunction with the relevant Code.

CAPA urges all constituents to lobby for university IP Policy consistent with this CAPA IP policy.

- 2.1.2.4 CAPA recognises the special status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, and that the use of these knowledges requires the consent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who own such knowledges.
- 2.1.2.5 CAPA supports the principles on intellectual property as outlined in the NTEU's draft institutional intellectual property policy. CAPA believes that this policy should be used to guide the formation and development of institutional intellectual property policy. CAPA also supports the Australian Research Council in ensuring that institutions in receipt of ARC research grants have a policy on intellectual property.
- 2.1.2.6 CAPA believes in cases of joint authorship the ordering and presence of names in the byline of such works shall fairly and justly reflect the respective

contributions to such work. Further, where a person did not contribute to such work in any way, their names not be present.

- 2.1.2.7 CAPA believes that the Anti-Terror Act impinges upon the rights of academic freedom and CAPA supports those affiliates who choose to conduct campaigns in opposition to the Act.
- 2.1.2.8 CAPA is opposed to the unfettered use of plagiarism detection technologies. CAPA believes that these bypass pedagogical means of assisting students by developing appropriate practices for referencing.
- 2.1.2.9 CAPA recognises the valuable contribution that all Indigenous communities worldwide make to the collective intellectual knowledge. CAPA also recognises the intellectual copyright ownership of these knowledge belongs to the Indigenous community from which the knowledge originates.
- 2.1.2.10 CAPA is concerned about the incidence of appropriation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate students' knowledge by non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics.
- 2.1.2.11 CAPA believes that there should be formal acknowledgement and protection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems held within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- 2.1.2.12 CAPA considers it vital that all contributors to a research project should be recognised as joint (multiple) owners of the intellectual property produced, e.g. Co-Operative Research Centres, and that the originators of any background intellectual property are also recognised.

CAPA supports the principles outlined in the National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research (September 2001).

- 2.1.2.13 CAPA deems it critical that authorship and other intellectual property rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate students be protected. Further, CAPA conveys to universities that it is unethical practice for supervisors to appropriate the unique knowledge imparted to publications by their students; and that all authors and contributors to co-authored works be appropriately and adequately recognised in any/all publications and other works. CAPA recognises that such appropriation takes the form of:
  - (a) ordinary plagiarism;
  - (b) unauthorised appropriation of broader knowledges and knowledge systems; and
  - (c) the adoption of methodologies utilised by Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples without recognition, acknowledgment or permission.

### 2.1.3 Information Technology

- 2.1.3.1 Digital storage and transmission of information is now an extremely common form of handling information. Increasingly, information required by postgraduate students is being stored in a digital form and made widely available over computer networks, such as the Internet. Email and other means of electronic data transfer have now become standard modes of communication, both within and between universities. Furthermore, digital networks allow unprecedented levels of access to necessary information resources by off-campus students. Geographic isolation no longer means exclusion from the milieu of tertiary education.
- 2.1.3.2 CAPA believes that access to networked electronic information is a right of all postgraduate students. A minimum standard of acceptable levels of access should include Email, telnet and file transfer protocol facilities, as well as access to the necessary hardware, such as terminals and modems. Facilities should be available to all postgraduate students, regardless of their faculty, department, or mode of enrolment. CAPA is strongly opposed to any move towards charging students for access to computing networks.
- 2.1.3.3 CAPA believes that any policy decisions relating to the provision of an Australia-wide higher education computing network should consider the following:
- (a) the importance of access to current information, particularly in research areas;
  - (b) the special role that networks play in reducing the isolation of small and regional campuses; and
  - (c) the special role that networks play in facilitating learning for distance education students and students with disabilities.
- 2.1.3.4 CAPA believes that an accessible, high quality computing network, the Australian Academic Research Network (AARNet), now plays a vital role in tertiary education.
- 2.1.3.5 CAPA believes that any moves to allow private enterprise access to the network must not be made at the expense of academic users, and that public money must not be used to subsidise private access.
- 2.1.3.6 CAPA believes in the importance of universities to provide appropriate orientation around computers and information technology in postgraduate education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students located remotely from their University of enrolment. CAPA believes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduates enrolled in distance education have a right to the same information technology resources as on-campus students.

### 2.1.4 Campus Security

- 2.1.4.1 Assaults on campus are an extremely serious problem for postgraduates who often work on campus after hours and out of semester. Therefore CAPA believes that:
- (a) institution administrations must take and be seen to take responsibility for the security of students and staff on campus;

- (b) more institutional resources should be allocated to this area particularly for the development of good lighting including well lit circulation spaces on campus, assessment of circulation spaces for potential points of ambush and the provision of alternate means of egress from all points on such paths, access to phones, alarms and security posts, escort and bus services;
- (c) security staff should include both men and women, and be sensitive to specific campus security needs;
- (d) institutions should increase security awareness by publicising both actual assaults, (while maintaining confidentiality) and measures taken to prevent their occurrence;
- (e) institutions should, in conjunction with other parties, collate information on assaults;
- (f) institutions should provide security that extends beyond the institution's campus to surrounding areas such as residential colleges and nearby parking areas. Thus institutions should liaise with appropriate authorities to ensure that adequate security provisions are made and enforced in these areas;
- (g) action needs to be taken by institutions and postgraduate associations to establish national standards for a secure and safe campus; and
- (h) universities should establish a range of penalties for dealing with offenders who are members of that University, according to the severity of the offence.

## **2.1.5 Accommodation**

- 2.1.5.1 CAPA notes that private residential colleges (not owned by a University, but in many cases adjacent to University campuses), are legally separate entities. CAPA further notes that private colleges are not subject to nor required to adopt the harassment and discrimination policies of individual Universities. CAPA also notes that private residential colleges (may) have their own Policy and that these procedures may be inadequate in comparison to University Policy. CAPA notes that private colleges are becoming increasingly co-educational.
- 2.1.5.2 CAPA recognises the need for a national approach for training of Private Residential College Advisors (senior student representatives in halls and accommodation), and staff of university based accommodation services, and recognises the value of a national manual to guide student accommodation services in their management of students accommodation needs, including inclusion of equity support measures
- 2.1.5.3 CAPA believes that students housed in accommodation provided for/by a University (including University accommodation colleges/halls of residence and separate legal entities established through a University to provide accommodation) should be afforded the basic tenancy rights of tenants.
- 2.1.5.4 CAPA support the following principles in relation to on-campus accommodation:
  - The provision of on-campus accommodation forms an important component of a broader strategy to ensure quality housing is available to students.

- The provision of on-campus accommodation should be safe and affordable.
- On campus accommodation can improve access to university for regional and international students.
- There should be effective mechanisms for the representation of residents' concerns through democratic forums which may include residents' councils and student associations

2.1.5.5 CAPA supports the following principles in relation to accommodation and housing:

- All students should have access to safe and affordable housing which may include on-campus accommodation.
- The availability of housing has important implications for the welfare, safety, security and health of postgraduate students. The inability to secure appropriate housing may adversely affect students' capacity to continue their studies.
- Universities and the state and federal governments have responsibilities to ensure that students have access to quality housing which may include on-campus accommodation.
- CAPA recognises that a range of housing and accommodation options must be available to suit the different circumstances of students. This should include housing suitable for students with dependents, a partner, or restricted mobility.
- All students should be permitted the rights of a tenant, including access to local tenancy tribunals, the right to privacy, and the right to not be charged unreasonably.

## **2.2 Postgraduate Education**

### **2.2.1 General Principles**

2.2.1.1 CAPA believes that open and free access to postgraduate education and the flow of benefits to society from research and advanced study are facilitated by the adequate resourcing of postgraduate study. This is best achieved through the establishment of a nationally agreed minimum level of postgraduate resourcing, which describes appropriate conditions and remuneration.

2.2.1.2 CAPA believes that remuneration of equal value for all full-time postgraduates should be provided by the Federal Government.

2.2.1.3 CAPA believes that remuneration comparable to that of full-time postgraduates should be available on a pro-rata basis for those postgraduates who must enrol on a part-time basis and who do not have other adequate means of financial support.

2.2.2 CAPA considers it important that all tertiary institutions to establish academic skills courses and support systems, particularly for those students in their first year of study at any stage.

### **2.2.3 Definition of a Postgraduate**

2.2.3.1 Notwithstanding the right of constituents to admit to their membership whomsoever they wish, CAPA defines a postgraduate as "A person who is engaged in a course of study for which the normal prerequisite for entry is at least a Bachelor degree (or equivalent). There is a legitimate place in

postgraduate study for pure research degrees, pure coursework degrees and degrees containing both coursework and research elements."

## **2.2.4 Income Support**

### **2.2.4.1 General Principles**

2.2.4.1.1 The general principles of income support recognise:

- (a) that higher education is a basic right of all people;
- (b) that society receives substantial benefit through higher education;
- (c) that food and shelter are basic necessities of life;
- (d) that studying at the postgraduate level and participating either full or part-time in the workforce is highly demanding, and detrimental to study, work and other commitments;
- (e) that lack of income support acts as a significant barrier to postgraduate study for many people;
- (f) that many postgraduate students currently study part-time in order to access other forms of government income support; and
- (g) that part-time study extends the time over which some postgraduate students access other forms of government income support.

2.2.4.1.2 CAPA believes that all postgraduate students should be provided with income support at a level which enables them to study full time, and is sufficient to cover basic living expenses including rent, electricity, water and phone services, food, clothing and transport. CAPA believes this level of income should not be less than 120% of the poverty line as defined by the Australian Council of Social Security, 120% of the poverty line being the level determined by the Henderson Inquiry into poverty as the "level of poverty".

2.2.4.1.3 CAPA endorses the work of the Joint Academic Scholarship Online Network, an online resource available free to students seeking postgraduate scholarships at Australian Universities.

2.2.4.1.4 CAPA supports the provision of flexible scholarships to all postgraduate students. This includes parents, carers, and those with dependants & family & community responsibilities. In particular CAPA supports distance students who have such responsibilities.

2.2.4.2 In order to increase the accessibility and equity of postgraduate education and to increase the diversity of the postgraduate community, CAPA believes there should be an increased number of scholarships for international students.

### **2.2.4.3 Educational Allowances**

2.2.4.3.1 CAPA supports the extension of Youth Allowance, Abstudy or Austudy to all postgraduate students who do not otherwise have access to income support. CAPA adopts as a minimum benchmark for this income support the level of (adult) unemployment benefit including rent assistance.

### **2.2.4.4 Institutional Awards**

2.2.4.4.1 CAPA believes that the number of coursework awards, scholarships and grants should be increased. This increase should not be obtained at the

expense of research awards, scholarships and grants but should be a genuine increase in the number of postgraduate awards scholarships and grants.

- 2.2.4.4.2 CAPA believes that coursework awards should be distributed equitably among faculties.
- 2.2.4.4.3 CAPA believes that institutional awards should only be offered under the same terms and conditions and at the same level as Commonwealth awards. Offering awards under conditions lower than those of the Commonwealth awards has the potential to lead to an overall reduction in the current mediocre conditions.

## **2.2.5 Postgraduate Concessions and Entitlements**

- 2.2.5.1 CAPA believes there should be a free, uniform travel concessions scheme for which all postgraduate students are eligible. Postgraduate students (including those on scholarships) should be eligible for Health Care cards.
- 2.2.5.2 CAPA remains concerned about the inequity and inconsistencies for travel concessions for all students in each State or Territory and including travel concessions when travelling interstate.
- 2.2.5.3 CAPA is concerned with the decline in student concessions being granted by many public and private entertainment venues which further undermines the financial stability of students, many of whom are highly affected by low income status, and who are less and less able to fully participate in a range of social interactions that are important for quality of life.
- 2.2.5.4 CAPA believes that all postgraduate full time students should be eligible for student status or retain full membership of professional organisations and trade unions.
- 2.2.6 CAPA believes that universities should provide a high quality bulk-billing health service on campuses accessible to all students and their dependants with the only requirement being a current student card. Such service should not involve additional costs to students either directly or indirectly. CAPA supports health care as a basic human right.
- 2.2.7 CAPA feels it is a right of all postgraduate students to have an annual allocation of funds for travel to facilitate participation in the wider academic community.
- 2.2.8 CAPA believes that all students (entitled by income support levels) be granted concession on all forms of public transport, including public transport from private providers (e.g. buses and light rail) and that such concession rights apply in all States and territories regardless of your home State or country (i.e. all domestic and international students).

## **2.2.9 Postgraduate Study Conditions**

- 2.2.9.1 Consistent with the rights of other workers, postgraduates should be entitled to:
  - (a) sick leave;
  - (b) maternity/paternity leave;
  - (c) compassionate leave;

- (d) recreation leave;
- (e) reimbursement for the travel and establishment costs associated with moving to a new place of residence in order to take up an award; and,
- (f) adoption leave.

#### **2.2.9.2 Maternity Leave**

- 2.2.9.2.1 CAPA believes that all awards should have provision for maternity leave on the following basis:
- (a) a period of twelve months around the time of the birth with three months full pay and automatic extension of candidature and scholarship; and
  - (b) up to nine months additional optional leave without pay and with deferment of candidature for the same period of time.

#### **2.2.9.3 Paternity Leave**

- 2.2.9.3.1 CAPA believes that all awards should have provision for paternity leave in the case of primary care giving and should equal provisions as set out for maternity leave in 3.7.2.1 on the following basis:
- (a) a period of three months around the time of birth, with full pay and automatic extension of candidature and scholarship; and,
  - (a) up to nine months optional leave without pay and with deferment of candidature for the same period of time.

#### **2.2.9.4 Adoption Leave**

- 2.2.9.4.1 CAPA believes that all awards should have provision for adoption leave on the basis of a period of twelve months around the time of adoption, with three months full pay and automatic extension of candidature and scholarship; and, up to nine months additional optional leave without pay and deferment of candidature for the same period of time.

#### **2.2.9.5 Cultural Leave**

- 2.2.9.5.1 CAPA recognises the importance of cultural affirmation and maintenance and supports the provision of:
- (a) paid leave to discharge community responsibilities; and,
  - (b) paid leave to participate in cultural and ceremonial processes.

#### **2.2.9.6 Staff - Student Relationships**

- 2.2.9.6.1 CAPA believes it is necessary for postgraduate students to be educated about the potential negative implications of entering into a romantic or sexual relationship with a staff member, particularly one's supervisor.

#### **2.2.9.7 Occupational Health and Safety**

- 2.2.9.7.1 CAPA believes that postgraduates should have the same occupational health and safety rights as tertiary institution employees.

- 2.2.9.7.2 CAPA advocates that both state and Federal occupational health and safety legislation provide appropriate and adequate protection for all members of the University.
- 2.2.9.7.3 CAPA supports the creation of campus Occupational Health and Safety Committees and believes that such committees should include a postgraduate representative.

#### **2.2.9.8 Insurance**

- 2.2.9.8.1 CAPA believes that every Australian University should provide a comprehensive work-cover type of accident insurance cover for all its postgraduate students.
- 2.2.9.8.2 Postgraduate students should receive insurance cover equivalent to paid workers doing similar work in similar environments.
- 2.2.9.8.3 Students are liable in the event of an accident occurring to any assistants under their supervision. An injured assistant for up to \$5 million could sue students. Students often undertake fieldwork in remote locations hundreds of miles from medical facilities. Students and assistants often carry firearms and undertake dangerous activities. Individual insurance is prohibitive for most students and therefore should be covered by their University.

### **2.2.10 Information Access**

#### **2.2.10.1 Library Resources**

- 2.2.10.1.1 Recognising that access to information is vital for the conduct of postgraduate study, CAPA is concerned that Australian University libraries are no longer capable of supplying services adequate to meet the needs of postgraduate students. The major areas of concern are:
- (a) the erosion of funding levels leading to a reduction in the existing services to postgraduate students;
  - (b) increased charges to students for access to information;
  - (c) the loss of specialist librarians; and
  - (d) the increased pressures on library staff.
- 2.2.10.1.2 CAPA believes that the long-term implications of the running down of Australian University libraries will be a reduction in the quality of Australian research, and, as a result, a decline in Australia's international competitiveness particularly in elaborately transformed manufactures and leading edge technologies.
- 2.2.10.1.3 CAPA believes that the Australia-wide decline in library services is the result of inadequate Federal funding of higher education, and of a failure on the part of institutions to properly support libraries. CAPA therefore believes that Federal funding for higher education must be maintained and extended to ensure that library resources are sufficient to allow postgraduate students to complete their studies in a timely and productive manner. CAPA also believes that institutions must prioritise library funding if the quality of the academic environment is to be maintained.
- 2.2.10.1.4 CAPA notes the increased incidence of Library mergers and moves towards increased provision of on-line journal and database access, coincident with a decrease in paper journal and text holdings. CAPA asserts that where only

on-line access is available for journals and other texts that Universities ensure the adequate provision of computers, software, infrastructure and licensing agreements

2.2.10.1.5 Given the current problems with libraries, CAPA believes that the provision of reciprocal library borrowing rights for postgraduate students from other institutions can assist in alleviating the impact of reduced funding.

### **2.2.10.2 National Theses Collection**

2.2.10.2.1 CAPA calls for the immediate establishment of a national access and retrieval system for postgraduate theses. This system must:

- (a) provide a seamless national search capacity of all postgraduate theses completed in Australian universities;
- (b) facilitate rapid retrieval of all theses;
- (c) respect the intellectual property, including moral rights, of Australian students;
- (d) be controlled by Australian University libraries;
- (e) provide no-cost access to all Australian students;
- (f) in the case of new theses, enable national access to postgraduate theses within two weeks of submission to a university library,
- (g) in the case of theses already deposited in paper form, enable national access within two weeks where a student submits an electronic version of their thesis to the appropriate university library or where an interlibrary loan request is made for a paper thesis; and
- (h) enable free national and international access to all Australian theses for postgraduate, academic and not-for profit research purposes and reciprocal rights for Australian access to overseas theses collections.

2.2.10.2.2 CAPA notes that the ADT program established in 2000, if fully implemented, will go a significant way to achieving all of these aims. Accordingly CAPA endorses rapid implementation of the ADT program and calls on the Commonwealth to provide enough additional funds to university libraries to provide for full digital access to all Australian postgraduate theses, including the back catalogue now held only in paper form, by the middle of 2003. These funds should be channelled to universities libraries via the Australian Research Council.

## **2.3 Coursework Postgraduates**

### **2.3.1 Role of Postgraduate Coursework Education**

2.3.1.1 CAPA believes that postgraduate coursework studies provide substantial benefits to society. They provide opportunity for furthering education, training, and the development of skills and acknowledges necessary for undertaking social and economic change, as well as skills in research. In many circumstances postgraduate courses also provide an essential professional qualification for initial entry and/or progress in vocations.

2.3.1.2 CAPA believes that the only way in which equity and access can be assured in higher education is through postgraduate coursework education being funded through the taxation system.

## **2.3.2 Quality in Postgraduate Coursework Education**

- 2.3.2.1 CAPA recognises that there has been a recent increase in the number of students enrolling in information technology coursework degrees, diplomas, certificates and professional doctorates and an increased focus in information technology by universities. This increase has not necessarily been met by a concomitant increase in staff and other resources. CAPA is aware of at least one recent survey of information technology coursework students where there was a significant degree of dissatisfaction expressed by the students in relation to postgraduate teaching pedagogies.
- 2.3.2.2 CAPA acknowledges the increasing number of two-year postgraduate coursework programs but quality of the course and resources provided for such course must be up to the Australian and OECD Standards.

## **2.3.3 Coursework Postgraduate Income support**

- 2.3.3.1 CAPA believes that all Masters by Coursework students should be able to access Centrelink benefits for the duration of their course.

## **2.3.4 Postgraduate Coursework Fees**

- 2.3.4.1 CAPA opposes the introduction of student fees for postgraduate coursework education because:
- (a) CAPA supports a higher education system which is accessible to students on the basis of academic merit and/or potential, and not on the ability to pay;
  - (b) this restricts access to higher education to those who are economically privileged, and will entrench existing inequities rather than creating an equal and just society; and
  - (c) CAPA believes that fee-paying courses lead to a reduction in standards of higher education via market driven curricula, lowering of pass standards and limited research opportunities.
- 2.3.4.2 Although CAPA opposes the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS), in the absence of a wholly publicly funded higher education system, CAPA recognises that regulated HECS fees are preferable to deregulated student fees and believes that all postgraduate coursework students should have access to a HECS place.
- 2.3.4.3 While recognising that the Postgraduate Education Loan Scheme (PELS) has enabled students who could not otherwise afford up-front fees to access postgraduate coursework education, CAPA opposes PELS on the basis that it entrenches the 'user-pays' doctrine in the funding of postgraduate coursework education. CAPA also notes that in the absence of any regulation of postgraduate coursework fees, PELS has enabled universities to increase student fees.
- 2.3.4.4 Notwithstanding the opposition of CAPA to the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) and CAPA's call for HECS to be abolished, CAPA believes it is of greater benefit to society to maintain HECS liability for postgraduate award courses of high social beneficence such as Nursing and Education and those awards which offer qualifications for initial entry into a profession than to subject them to a full-fee regime and eligibility for PELS.

2.3.4.5 CAPA believes that the optimal 'fee' for such courses is zero in light of the current national staffing shortages faced by these professions.

## **2.4 Research Postgraduates**

### **2.4.1 Postgraduate Research Programs**

2.4.1.1 CAPA believes that the current Government focus for a growing postgraduate cohort has been beneficial, but this is not matched with additional resources due to a remaining bias toward undergraduate education. This has led to an additional number of research students who are capable and able to complete a research degree being unable to participate, or participate on a sub-par level.

2.4.1.2 CAPA believes that an adequately funded and accessible postgraduate research program is in the best economic, social and cultural interests of the nation.

2.4.1.3 CAPA believes that the Federal Government should increase funding for postgraduate research, in particular the APA, APA with Stipend and APA(I) programs, given the work outputs from this sector, the stipend rate being below the poverty line, and the contributions towards the Australian Research and the body of knowledge for Australia.

2.4.1.4 CAPA believes that the current policy of allocating these scholarships on a formula basis, where additional protection is provided for institutions with a developing research profile, is the most equitable way of distributing a scarce resource.

2.4.1.5 Therefore CAPA believes that a specific portion of each University's Research Training Scheme allocation per effective full time research student should be made directly available to the research student to be used for their research.

### **2.4.2 Funding For Postgraduate Research Education**

2.4.2.1 CAPA believes that postgraduate researchers make a significant contribution to the national research effort, estimated to be greater than 60% of the research effort in higher education. Research conducted by postgraduate students has direct short and long-term benefits for the nation as a whole, and for our understanding of us as a community. Australia's international competitiveness in the global community is linked to the quality and quantity of the postgraduate research effort. CAPA believes ensuring a healthy and internationally respected postgraduate research effort is essential to Australia's social, economic, cultural and political development.

2.4.2.2 Given the significant contribution made to the national research effort by postgraduate research students, and the considerable public benefit of this research, CAPA believes that postgraduate research education system should be funded via the taxation system.

2.4.2.3 CAPA opposes the reduction in the number of research student places associated with the implementation of the Research Training Scheme as detrimental to the Australian research effort.

- 2.4.2.4 CAPA opposes any introduction of fee paying domestic research places, believing that research education should be accessible to students on the basis of academic merit and/or potential, rather than the ability to pay.
- 2.4.2.5 In support of more transparent and accountable financial arrangements by Universities, CAPA believes that there must be transparency in the allocation and use of finances used to support postgraduate research and coursework structure.
- 2.4.2.6 CAPA believes that Universities must show transparency in their allocation of Research Training Scheme (RTS) funding, demonstrating that funds are being directed into research infrastructure only.
- 2.4.2.7 CAPA advocates that Universities demonstrate, through accountable and transparent systems, where RTS funding goes, and how they reflect on the quality and accessibility of the programs

### 2.4.3 Stipends

#### 2.4.3.1 General Principles:

- 2.4.3.1.1 Recognising:
- (a) That lack of income support acts as a significant barrier to students who have the ability and desire to undertake a research higher degree; and
  - (b) the significant contribution that research conducted by postgraduates makes to the national research effort.
- 2.4.3.1.2 CAPA believes that all postgraduate students conducting research should be provided with a Commonwealth funded stipend subject to a means test.
- 2.4.3.1.3 CAPA believes that overseas students should be accorded the same rights as Australian students in pursuing education. In particular CAPA believes that awards offered specifically to overseas students should be tied to the APA and that other awards offered to overseas postgraduates be equal to those offered to Australian postgraduates.

#### 2.4.3.2 Rate

- 2.4.3.2.1 CAPA believes that the value of the stipend should be indexed for CPI increases.
- 2.4.3.2.2 CAPA believes that the value of the stipend should be set relative to an accepted higher education award, say 56% of the value of an ARC Postdoctoral Fellowship as determined in the last review of stipends by the ARC.
- 2.4.3.2.3 CAPA believes that the value of an APA with stipend be at least 56% of an ARC Postdoctoral Fellowship.

#### 2.4.3.3 Duration

- 2.4.3.3.1 Recognising that Australian Postgraduate Awards with Stipend are provided to research postgraduates, CAPA believes that Australian Postgraduate Awards with Stipend should be provided for a period of four years for

Doctorates and two years for Masters degrees, with the possibility of a six month extension where circumstances beyond the control of the postgraduate have prevented completion of the degree.

- 2.4.3.3.2 Present DEEWR regulations stipulate that commonwealth scholarships shall be for duration of three years plus limited extension. However, this underestimates the time required to complete a quality PhD of world class standard. There is also evidence to suggest this current regulation effects equity groups at a greater rate than other students and contributes to lower completion rates in those groups in particular.

#### **2.4.3.4 Taxation Status**

- 2.4.3.4.1 CAPA believes that scholarships should be provided to postgraduate students, regardless of their source, should be income tax exempt, and not count towards income for Centrelink because:

- (a) postgraduates are not employed;
- (b) the current benchmark stipend is set at a rate which is based on the assumption that it is an after tax value; and
- (c) the current benchmark stipend value is such that any further reduction in the value of the stipend will act as a significant disincentive to students considering studying at the postgraduate level.

- 2.4.3.4.2 CAPA believes that if scholarships were offered under the same terms and conditions, and at the same level as employees in higher education there may be a case for taxing scholarships. However, as rates are currently non-compliant with these terms, CAPA is adamant that all scholarships should be tax-free and not considered income by Centrelink.

#### **2.4.3.5 Terms and Conditions of Scholarship Awards**

- 2.4.3.5.1 CAPA believes that scholarship conditions should be expanded to include family leave provisions to allow for special care of members of immediate family group (partners, including de facto and same sex, children and significant others). As such, CAPA believes that same sex and de facto partners should be entitled to claim the relocation allowance of the Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA).
- 2.4.3.5.2 CAPA believes that all university scholarships should include conditions no less than DEEWR guidelines or scholarship awards.
- 2.4.3.5.3 CAPA notes with concern that changes in Guidelines for APAs no longer allow automatic transfer of scholarships between institutions. This is contrary to the Government's stated policy objective of improving student mobility. CAPA also notes adoption of APA Transfer Policies by individual institutions has occurred as a result.
- 2.4.3.5.4 CAPA notes that where institutions have adopted their own policies in response some have made provision for assisting a student to apply for an APA at another institution in exceptional circumstances. (One such circumstance is where the student's supervisor is leaving the institution and a suitable replacement cannot be found.)
- 2.4.3.5.5 CAPA asserts there are many valid exceptions that institutions should

consider in an effort to assist students in obtaining an APA if they are 'transferring out'. In such situations exceptional circumstances be defined on a case-by-case basis.

- 2.4.3.5.6 CAPA asserts that where a student holds a University based scholarship (which are by their very nature non transferable) and 'transferring out' is necessary the institution should also make provision for assistance in obtaining another scholarship where an exceptional circumstance exists. Other study conditions as per CAPA Policy on Supervision should also be followed.

#### **2.4.3.6 Allocation of Awards**

- 2.4.3.6.1 CAPA believes that the body responsible for allocation of APAs with stipend to institutions should ensure that:

- (a) scholarships are distributed to institutions in as equitable a manner as possible;
- (b) institutions with a developing research profile are not disadvantaged in any formula driven allocation process;
- (c) awards are not tied to particular research grants or subject areas. Rather, that they are made available to institutions to distribute on the basis of merit; and
- (d) institutions in receipt of scholarships provide adequate resources to postgraduate students so that effective research can be carried out.

- 2.4.3.6.2 CAPA believes that, as the national representative body for postgraduate students, it should be consulted when any changes to the allocation process are being considered.

- 2.4.3.6.3 CAPA believes that criteria for the allocation of postgraduate scholarships should include previous academic achievement, economic disadvantage, merit of project, relevant work and life experience, other relevant training experience, current enrolment in a postgraduate degree and should ensure no direct or indirect discrimination takes place. Selection criteria must be made openly available prior to the application date.

- 2.4.3.6.4 CAPA opposes the adoption and continuance of completion driven allocative mechanisms by institutions where provision for equity measures or other non-completion criteria are absent. CAPA notes with concern:

- (a) the adoption, by individual Universities, of an allocation mechanism for the APA that is based on completions;
- (b) the potential for institutions to use a completions-driven allocation formula for APAs at the Faculty and /or School level.

CAPA does not believe the wholesale adoption by individual institutions of the 'completions agenda' (contained within the Research Training Scheme) for their own institutional policies and funding mechanisms is in the best interests of University research.

- 2.4.3.6.5 CAPA strongly opposes the Federal Government's provision of a set amount of funding to Universities for APAs.

#### **2.4.3.7 Tied Awards**

- 2.4.3.7.1 CAPA believes that Australian Postgraduate Awards with stipend should not

be tied to specific subject areas, “national priorities” or other conditions not related to providing the most appropriate students with the opportunity to conduct research in the field of their choice pursuant to equity issues.

2.4.3.7.2 The creation of publicly funded tied awards, other than those designed to facilitate access for disadvantaged students, has the potential to restrict access for able postgraduates because they do not meet specific criteria. This may then result in a decline in the standards of Australian higher education research, which is clearly undesirable.

2.4.3.7.3 The creation of any publicly funded tied awards should not reduce the pool of non-tied awards, as this would deny access to awards by postgraduates who, for many reasons, will be unable to take up awards which are subject to specific criteria.

#### **2.4.3.8 Part-time candidature**

2.4.3.8.1 CAPA believes that all scholarships should be tax-free, including scholarships for part-time candidates.

#### **2.4.3.9 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student scholarships**

2.4.3.9.1 CAPA believes that Australian Postgraduate Awards and University Postgraduate Awards for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students should be set at minimum \$25,000 per annum tax-free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduates to take into consideration:

- (a) older age entering postgraduate work;
- (b) family and extended family commitments;
- (c) that undergraduate degrees typically are obtained later in life; and
- (d) Socioeconomic disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

### **2.4.4 Duration of Candidature**

2.4.4.1 CAPA believes that institutions should:

- (a) define minimum and maximum duration for all postgraduate courses;
- (b) allow up to a total of 12 months intermission during the candidature (not including maternity, paternity, other family leave and sick leave and leave taken due to a disability);
- (c) provide appropriate extensions of time to students who upgrade their degree; and,
- (d) provide sufficient subjects and enabling support courses for coursework candidates to enable completion in the minimum time.

2.4.5 CAPA believes that completion times should be extended for all persons with carer responsibilities. CAPA believes that flexibility for completion times should be extended if required, taking into consideration carer responsibilities and / or special needs.

2.4.5.1 CAPA disputes that a quality research higher degree can be completed in the Australian research environment in the candidature times set by DEEWR (two years for Masters and four years for PhD). However, CAPA recognises that it is in

the University's and student's interests to complete their studies in a timely manner. CAPA believes that institutions should, in consultation with their postgraduate association, put in place mechanisms to aid students' chances of completing within the specified time. CAPA also believes that the Federal Government should provide funding to assist with the provision of these mechanisms. These mechanisms could include but would not be limited to:

- (a) structured programs;
- (b) supervisor education programs;
- (c) mentoring programs;
- (d) writing-up scholarships;
- (e) incentives for completion; and
- (f) student-supervisor agreements.

2.4.5.2 In light of the increased emphasis on completion times, CAPA urges institutions to examine in detail the reasons for withdrawal or transfer of candidates and to take steps where necessary to address the reasons for withdrawal or transfer. If completion times are reduced then the total resources given to the course should not be reduced.

2.4.5.3 CAPA notes the emphasis of the Research Training Scheme (RTS) on completion times has led institutions to suggest and engage in unofficial change of candidature arrangements with students. In particular, CAPA notes with concern the move by some institutions to encourage or request of fulltime research students who seek suspension or transfer to part-time candidature to remain enrolled as full time candidates, notwithstanding that institutions tacitly acknowledge that the student will not be engaged in full time research. CAPA notes the potential for such unofficial arrangements to prejudice continuation of a student's candidature, particularly during the process and consideration of annual progress reports.

2.4.5.4 CAPA believes that in accepting a student for a research project that the University shares the responsibility for completion of the research project. CAPA also believes it is unreasonable to penalise students who fail to complete their studies in their allotted time. To this end Universities should not impose restrictive penalties, financial or otherwise that may further diminish the students

## **2.4.6 Supervision**

### **2.4.6.1 General Principles**

2.4.6.1.1 CAPA recognises that supervision of postgraduate students with a research component to their degree by experienced researchers plays a vital role in research education. CAPA believes that it is the supervisor's role to provide instruction, assistance, review and constructive criticism of written work, to act as a sounding board for ideas and plans and, in general, take responsibility for providing quality research students. Further, thesis submission processes should require that an agreement is written and signed by the supervisor, stating that the thesis is of sufficient quality for external examination.

2.4.6.1.2 CAPA endorses the efforts of institutions and CAPA constituents to officially recognise components of good supervision by having awards, but only where these awards are allocated on the basis of student input (student

input may include submissions and participation on judging panels).

- 2.4.6.1.3 CAPA acknowledges the special relationships that exist between supervisors and their students and the special benefits that result. However, CAPA also recognises that unique problems can arise, especially due to the power imbalance. CAPA believes that such problems can in part be redressed by codes of conduct for supervision, which will act as a contract between the University, supervisor and student.
- 2.4.6.1.4 In general, supervisors and co-supervisors should have minimum qualifications equivalent to the level of degree they are supervising, recognising however, that in some circumstances non-academically qualified experts may be deemed equally appropriate.
- 2.4.6.1.5 Council endorses CAPA's Model Code For The Conduct Of Postgraduate Research.
- 2.4.6.2 CAPA recognises the difficulty experienced by prospective international students when selecting supervisors, especially when this selection is made prior to arrival in Australia.
- 2.4.6.3 CAPA believes it is essential an appropriate person be appointed at each institution to monitor and maintain the standards of postgraduate supervision and resources for postgraduates set down by the University. In addition, this person should act in a postural capacity, and represent students to their departments and act on student grievances. This person should be equivalent to a professor with a proven record of interest in postgraduate issues and supervision. This person should sit on all committees of relevance to postgraduate students and have a close formal relationship with postgraduate student organisations. The selection panel should include the president of the postgraduate student organisation.

#### **2.4.6.4 Codes of Supervision**

- 2.4.6.4.1 CAPA believes that all institutions, in close consultation with their postgraduate associations, should establish, maintain and monitor the adherence to a code of conduct/practice in supervision.
- 2.4.6.4.2 CAPA believes that the CAPA model code of supervision developed during 1995 should form the basis for all institutional codes and guidelines for supervision, and should provide a basis for constituents to gain improvements to existing institutional Policy on supervision.

#### **2.4.6.5 Supervisory Agreements**

- 2.4.6.5.1 CAPA believes that the development of any pro-forma student/supervisor code of conduct agreements must be done in consultation with the institution's postgraduate representative association/s.
- 2.4.6.5.2 Failure by a candidate to comply with any aspect of the agreement shall not prejudice their candidature.

#### **2.4.6.6 Staff Development for Supervision**

- 2.4.6.6.1 CAPA encourages all universities to convene regular staff development sessions on postgraduate supervision in which all supervisors should participate, as part of their continuing development, to ensure high

standards of supervision.

- 2.4.6.6.2 CAPA believes that institutional postgraduate associations can play an important and constructive role in supervision staff development workshops by providing an overview of the postgraduate experience and describing common supervision scenarios from the student perspective.
- 2.4.6.6.3 CAPA believes that supervisory induction courses which describe institutional Policy relating to supervision, and the role and responsibilities of the supervisor, should be compulsory for all new supervisors.
- 2.4.6.6.4 CAPA believes that a mentoring scheme for new supervisors is beneficial to their development, and to the supervision provided to the postgraduate.
- 2.4.6.6.5 CAPA considers it vital that universities provide adequate support at the highest possible professional standard to the student's area of interest.
- 2.4.6.6.6 Where universities have accreditation or registration schemes for supervisors, CAPA deems it appropriate that former students have input into the process of accreditation of their supervisor and that this input should play a role in the determination of whether accreditation will be granted.

## **2.4.7 Examination and Assessment**

### **2.4.7.1 Thesis-Based Assessment**

- 2.4.7.1.1 CAPA notes the NTEU's Guidelines for Thesis Examination and endorses these as a set of ethical guidelines for examiners. However, CAPA believes that there should be nationally consistent guidelines for thesis examination that take specific postgraduate issues into account. The following should be included in these guidelines:
  - (a) a definition or explanation of what constitutes an appropriate thesis based on the level and research component of the degree;
  - (b) requirements that multiple examiners are suitably qualified, have a good knowledge of the field of research, and are preferably external to the student's institution;
  - (c) appropriate lengths of time for the marking of theses must be set;
  - (d) examiners should be notified of the time allocated for thesis marking;
  - (e) reminders should be sent to examiners at regular intervals;
  - (f) a right of students to veto the appointment of examiners and adjudicators;
  - (g) the right of students to reply to the examiners and adjudicators before a final decision regarding the thesis is made; and
  - (h) a right of students to submit or resubmit PhD work for Master's degrees if unsuccessful at the PhD level.
- 2.4.7.1.2 CAPA believes that postgraduates whose theses require substantive rewriting should be provided with mechanisms to reactivate their postgraduate student status and to take up any remaining and unused scholarship funding.
- 2.4.7.1.3 CAPA endorses the NTEU examination policy.

### **2.4.7.2 Non-Thesis-Based Assessment**

2.4.7.2.1 CAPA believes that there should be national institutional guidelines for assessment in postgraduate coursework programs. These should be detailed and well publicised. The following should be included in these guidelines:

- (a) that assessment should be fair and not arbitrary;
- (b) that students should be able to choose between a range of forms of assessment;
- (c) that assessment should be an integral part of the educational process, be meaningful and related to the course curriculum;
- (d) that provision should exist for special consideration;
- (e) that provisions should exist to allow students with disabilities to apply for accommodation in assessment methods;
- (f) that students be provided with maximum feedback on work submitted for assessment (including the right to view their corrected examination scripts) and that the results of ongoing assessment be made available promptly;
- (g) that students be notified of all assessment requirements within the first week of the commencement of a course and have the right to negotiate the forms of assessment used in a course;
- (h) that students have the right to resubmit or redeem work submitted for assessment;
- (i) that students have the right to appeal against a grade and have a piece of work assessed by an independent assessor;
- (j) that set criterion should be used where marks are allocated for class participation. Attention is also drawn to section 5.3 with regards to the research of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and
- (k) that non thesis based assessment can be incorporated into postgraduate research degrees. In these instances the guidelines for assessment of the coursework and research components of the degree must be made clear.

### **2.4.7.3 Definition of non- thesis based assessment:**

- (a) not centred around a text;
- (b) may include an exegesis;
- (c) ranging from arts based to practical technical projects; and
- (d) equally valid with wholly text based assessment

### **2.4.7.4 Assessment of Non-Traditional Research**

2.4.7.4.1 CAPA believes that the criteria for measuring and documenting research performance need to be broad enough to recognise variation between disciplines. This is especially important in areas of research, which are new to tertiary institutions, such as music, visual, fine, performing arts and multimedia and new technologies. Attention is also drawn to section 5. 3 with regards to the research of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## **2.4.8 Postdoctoral Fellowships**

2.4.8.1 CAPA believes that increasing postdoctoral places is vital to both achieving high standards in research and for keeping early career researchers with local qualifications in Australia

- 2.4.8.2 CAPA believes that postdoctoral fellowships provide an important first step for postgraduates undertaking an academic career.
- 2.4.8.3 CAPA believes that the current number of postdoctoral fellowships is insufficient and that this reduces career opportunities for postgraduates.
- 2.4.8.4 CAPA believes that the Federal Government should increase the number of postdoctoral fellowships funded through the Australian Research Council in recognition of the important role that fellowships play in a developing academic career, and in keeping highly talented and skilled Australian graduates in the country. CAPA believes that there should be a per annum increase in the number of postdoctoral fellowships funded through the Australian Research Council in order to achieve an effective increase in the quality of academics and as an important factor in increasing research capacity.

## **2.5 Minimum Resource Requirements**

- 2.5.1 CAPA declares that the provision of adequate levels of resources is vital to the effective delivery of postgraduate programs across all modes of study. Additionally, the adequate resourcing of all postgraduate students is an important factor in achieving timely completions of both research and coursework degrees. In recognition of this, CAPA believes that a best practice policy for resources should be established, and that Universities (and their related organizations) be actively encouraged to meet this standard. Council endorses the CAPA Statement on Minimum Resources as a guide to such standards.
- 2.5.2 CAPA believes that increased attention must be paid to levels of resources, services and funding for activities associated with teaching and research made available to postgraduate students at School and Departmental level. Evidence indicates that such resource support varies significantly across disciplines and institutions despite the importance of such support being vital to the attainment of successful research and learning outcomes.
- 2.5.3 CAPA notes the efforts of several Universities to establish a uniform, tangible and enforceable university-wide policy for the allocation of resources to postgraduate students.
- 2.5.4 CAPA believes that the costs of thesis production should be met by the institution in which the postgraduate is enrolled.
- 2.5.5 CAPA believes that postgraduates should be provided with the funding necessary to undertake any fieldwork/research trips essential to the completion of their thesis.
- 2.5.6 CAPA believes funding of these essential costs will assist in achieving timely completions.
- 2.5.7 CAPA believes that fieldwork costs should be publicly funded.

## 2.6 Higher Education Research

### 2.6.1 Balance of Research Effort

- 2.6.1.1 Tertiary education institutions perform a fundamental and valuable role in Australian research by undertaking research for scientific and cultural reasons, which may have potential value for the Australian economy and society, providing research education at a postgraduate and postdoctoral level, and assembling, analysing and disseminating new knowledge across a wide range of disciplines.
- 2.6.1.2 CAPA believes that any reduction in the range of disciplines researched in higher education will lead to a narrowing of the research base, thereby undermining the capacity for applied research in the long term.
- 2.6.1.3 CAPA opposes the direction of higher education research effort towards short-term economic objectives; because it believes that there will be an undesirable reduction in research in fields that address broader community concerns and needs. Moreover, CAPA recognises that research outcomes are intrinsically unpredictable and thus short-term efforts to 'pick winners' will undermine Australia's research capability and potential.
- 2.6.1.4 Recognising that many important advances in society have arisen from basic research, CAPA believes that the Commonwealth has a responsibility to support a significant proportion of basic research in the higher education sector. CAPA also believes that the higher education sector provides a rare opportunity for curiosity based research, and that such research should be supported by the Commonwealth. Therefore, CAPA opposes any reduction of funding for basic research in higher education.
- 2.6.1.5 CAPA believes that a balance must be struck between fundamental, strategic and applied research in the higher education sector, but, recognising the special role of fundamental research, and the important potential benefits which society may derive from this research. Therefore, while recognising that strategic and applied research are important components of higher education research, CAPA believes Commonwealth research support should be biased towards fundamental research.
- 2.6.1.6 CAPA supports the maintenance of a strong research effort in the Humanities. Whilst recognising that direct economic benefits stemming from research in the Humanities are sometimes difficult to identify, CAPA believes that research in the Humanities has intrinsic value and plays a vital role in the development and understanding of our society and culture.
- 2.6.1.7 CAPA notes the Federal Government's commitment to aligning more closely the interests and involvement of industry in the research undertaken in higher education. While CAPA believes that business and industry, as major beneficiaries of publicly funded research, should contribute to the national research effort, CAPA believes that industry involvement in higher education research must not infringe on intellectual freedom and the integrity of research.

### 2.6.2 Funding For University Research

- 2.6.2.1 CAPA believes that the role of universities in nurturing public intellectuals should be recognised in research funding.

- 2.6.2.2 CAPA believes that the current level of public funding for higher education research is insufficient to sustain an internationally competitive, high quality higher education research sector. CAPA believes it is imperative there be significant re-investment in Australia's research capability
- 2.6.2.3 CAPA is broadly supportive of additional industry and business funding for higher education research, although remains concerned about the level of control that institutions have over privately or joint public/private funded research projects. CAPA opposes any reduction in Federal Government funding for higher education research as a result of increased private sector contributions.
- 2.6.2.4 CAPA believes that strict guidelines for the acceptance of private funding for research must be introduced by higher education institutions to preserve academic standards, autonomy and accountability and to ensure that principles of access and equity in employment and education are observed within higher education institutions.

### **2.6.3 Research ethics**

#### **2.6.3.1 Codes of Research Conduct**

- 2.6.3.1.1 CAPA believes that institutional codes of research conduct play an important role in ensuring ethical, responsible and safe research practices. Such codes of conduct should include details on:
- (a) types of research which require clearance by ethics committees;
  - (b) procedures for obtaining an ethics clearance;
  - (c) requirements for research data archiving;
  - (d) any institutional requirements in relation to publications; and
  - (e) authorship and attribution.
- 2.6.3.1.2 CAPA believes that this policy should be included in research degree handbooks, and in any information provided to students prior to their enrolment.
- 2.6.3.1.3 CAPA believes that institutional Codes of Research Conduct should be explicitly referred to in institutional Intellectual Property Policy.

#### **2.6.3.2 Research in the field of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People**

- 2.6.3.2.1 CAPA recognises that correct communication protocols for researchers conducting research on traditional owners land need to be carried out. Furthermore, awareness of these protocols needs to be made available to researchers.
- 2.6.3.2.2 CAPA believes it critical that tertiary institutions provide information to research students for the conduct of correct communication protocols regarding research on traditional owners' land and for CAPA constituents to ensure that this occurs.
- 2.6.3.2.3 CAPA is aware that much research about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples is carried out by non-Indigenous students. Many non-Indigenous students lack awareness about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and cultural protocols, and often undertake research in Indigenous communities and on traditional owners' lands without guidance.

- 2.6.3.2.4 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ethics committees and advisory boards are needed to ensure that best practice in research ethics from Indigenous perspectives is undertaken.

### **2.6.3.3 Research for and by queer-identifying people**

- 2.6.3.3.1 CAPA affirms that queer postgraduate research projects – projects by queer students, or on queer issues, or using queer research subjects – should receive fair and equal treatment and scrutiny by ethics approval committees, as compared to non-queer research projects. For example, no project should be denied ethics approval due to its queer content or subjects, if similar non-queer research would have been approved.

## **2.6.4 Collaborative Research**

- 2.6.4.1 CAPA believes that collaborative research between the private and higher education sectors can be mutually beneficial, but CAPA also recognises that unless institutional policy is developed to protect students in particular from highly directed projects, this collaboration can be problematic.

- 2.6.4.2 CAPA believes that institutional policy for collaborative research should ensure that, prior to commencement of research, the institution, research workers (including students who may work on the project), and the private sector collaborator reach agreement about the following issues:

- (a) intellectual property;
- (b) timing and confidentiality of publications;
- (c) responsibilities of supervisor/s;
- (d) funding;
- (e) academic freedom; and,
- (f) reporting requirements to private sector collaborator.

- 2.6.4.3 CAPA believes that where a student enters an existing project, the agreements made relating to the issues listed above should be made clear to the student.

## **2.6.5 Postgraduate Research Centres**

- 2.6.5.1 Whilst supportive of inter-discipline networking and congeniality, CAPA is concerned that many postgraduates are being tied to research centres without their consent, and that, furthermore, these may not be applicable to their areas of study.

- 2.6.5.2 CAPA therefore believes that in such circumstances, postgraduates should be offered the choice of placement of research centres, (and that this be relevant to their research) or the option to remain within their Schools/Faculties.

## **2.6.6 Co-operative Research Centres**

- 2.6.6.1 CAPA notes the encouragement of extensive industry collaboration in higher education research through the Co-operative Research Centres program.

- 2.6.6.2 CAPA is concerned about the lack of any measures to protect the interests of postgraduates in CRCs and other industry linked research programs in view of the potential conflict between the aims of industry and those of educational institutions.

2.6.6.3 Whilst CAPA is pleased that Co-operative Research Centres are attracting industry and business funding, CAPA remains concerned that some CRCs are attracting such a proportion of institutional funds that other areas within the institution are suffering funding cutbacks. CAPA believes that CRCs should not be funded to the detriment of other university activities.

### **2.6.7 Technology Parks**

2.6.7.1 CAPA notes the development of technology parks and believes they represent an additional and potentially productive site for research and technology transfer. CAPA believes technology parks should not be the preserve of transnational corporations but small medium enterprises (SMEs) should be encouraged to participate.

2.6.7.2 CAPA believes that technology parks should be primarily funded by industry and that close linkages with industry must not undermine the academic integrity of postgraduate research projects being conducted in technology parks.

### **2.6.8 Role of The Australian Research Council**

2.6.8.1 CAPA believes the Australian Research Council should be an independent organisation with the power to initiate inquiries and give advice on any matters pertaining to research and research education.

2.6.8.2 CAPA condemns the decision to remove responsibility for Australian Postgraduate Awards from the ARC. CAPA believes this creates an artificial and incoherent cleavage between research and research education.

2.6.8.3 Recognising that the ARC is the body charged with providing the Minister responsible for higher education with advice on non-medical research in higher education, CAPA believes that:

- (a) strict guidelines should be in place to ensure that the ARC does not direct research towards narrow, short-term economic goals at the expense of the broad range of social needs;
- (b) the ARC should give special attention to basic research and to the Humanities, Social and Theoretical sciences; and
- (c) CAPA has appropriate expertise and knowledge of research in higher education, particularly postgraduate research, to make a valuable contribution to higher education research policy decisions, and should thus be included as a member of the Council.

2.6.8.4 CAPA opposes the National Research Funding Policy based on predicted socio-economic objectives by the ARC, as such a policy may lead to the manipulation of research funding, and will undermine the higher education sector's responsibility for providing a broader range of disciplines.

## 3 Equity & Access in Higher Education

### 3.1 Equity, Access and Equal Opportunity

#### 3.1.1 Principles

- 3.1.1.1 CAPA recognises that equal opportunity requires the elimination of particular forms of unequal treatment which directly or indirectly disadvantage people in their educational and employment opportunities. It requires individual differences to be recognised in line with current Federal Equal Opportunity Legislation to ensure that no one is at a disadvantage because of these differences.
- 3.1.1.2 Beyond this recognition, however, CAPA also acknowledges the necessity to break through the assumptions and limitations inherent in legislative languages and frameworks. For this reason, the 'English' in 'Non-English Speaking Background' (NESB) needs to be problematised. CAPA uses the NESB acronym advisedly.
- 3.1.1.3 CAPA believes equal opportunity programs which (a) take positive and active steps to eradicate discrimination and (b) counteract the continuing impact of both past discrimination, in both attitudes and practice, will encourage a system which maximises choices available to all people regardless of their gender, race, ethno-cultural background, age, socio-economic background, disability, mental health status and sexual identity, and which enables them to participate actively in society and to reach their full potential.
- 3.1.1.4 CAPA believes that market forces cannot guarantee equal opportunity in education; rather, that such forces will ensure the opposite. Opportunity considerations must be calculated in funding for higher education regardless of the economic climate.
- 3.1.1.5 CAPA believes that it is essential that equal opportunity committees or units should include postgraduate representation and address educational as well as employment issues.
- 3.1.1.6 CAPA believes that the courses in our universities and other tertiary institutions should reflect the multicultural nature of Australian society by incorporating into the curriculum culturally diverse approaches and perceptions.
- 3.1.2 In circumstances where departments of tertiary institutions are affected by funding cutbacks or a reallocation of resources, CAPA believes that all processes of restructuring should be carried out without prejudicing equity and access. In all circumstances, access and equity should be a central consideration in any restructuring of university departments.
- 3.1.2.1 CAPA recognises a need by some postgraduate students for special assistance and support with editing and proofreading of assignments and theses. These students include, but are not limited to those with a temporary and permanent disability such as a visual impairment or learning disability and those with English as a second language. Universities should develop procedures including allocation of funds for providing such support. CAPA is aware that current practice is inconsistent between and within universities, and is potentially open to abuse. Support should only be provided to students with special needs. Students' work should not be completed by a third party. There is a need for appropriate ongoing assessment of students' needs.

- 3.1.2.2 CAPA believes that universities administrative practices need to be flexible, accommodating and transparent to cater for students from different equity groups to avoid discriminatory practices e.g. consistent and transparent special consideration and leave of absence provisions.

### **3.1.3 Commonwealth Equity Policy**

- 3.1.3.1 CAPA believes that the Federal Government has a responsibility to establish equity guidelines, programs and targets for the higher education sector. Furthermore, CAPA believes that all national and institutional equity Policy should include specific strategies for the delivery of postgraduate education.
- 3.1.3.2 CAPA deplores the lack of adequate, thorough or appropriate strategies for equity provisions at the postgraduate level, particularly in fee-paying courses.
- 3.1.3.3 CAPA supports the use of the Higher Education Equity Program to provide initial funding for new equity programs designed to assist in meeting institutional equity targets. However, CAPA believes that funding for the Program is inadequate and should be increased to allow for the establishment and implementation of adequate equity programs at the institutional level.
- 3.1.3.4 CAPA recognises that existing DEEWR equity indicators are inadequate and are more appropriate for undergraduate populations. CAPA calls for the development of more appropriate postgraduate equity indicators.

### **3.1.4 Selection, Entry and Admission into Higher Education**

- 3.1.4.1 CAPA believes that academic merit, or academic potential, as in the case of mature aged students and students from disadvantaged backgrounds, should be the only criteria used for determining entry to tertiary education.
- 3.1.4.2 CAPA believes that selection and entry criteria for higher education should be open and fair, and should not discriminate against Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, people who have disabilities, or people on the basis of gender, age, national or ethnic origin, sexuality, marital status, religious or political beliefs, geographic location, and social and economic background. Selection and entry criteria for higher education should also serve to break down existing inequities within society, to counteract discrimination, and should be part of a comprehensive approach to providing educational opportunities for socially and educationally disadvantaged groups.
- 3.1.4.3 CAPA believes that selection and entry criteria should also reduce workforce segmentation, structural barriers between education sectors and encourage greater mobility between the workforce and formal education.
- 3.1.4.4 CAPA recognises the importance of admissions requirements and procedures for access for part-time and mature aged students, and that the provision of special entry and mature aged entry schemes offer educational opportunities to many students who are otherwise excluded.
- 3.1.4.5 CAPA believes that further changes to selection and entry criteria must be undertaken to improve the participation of under-represented groups. Thus CAPA believes that Higher Education peak bodies and universities should develop selection and entry procedures which include recognition of all prior learning including professional experience, workforce participation and life skills, to ensure equitable access to higher education.

3.1.4.6 CAPA believes that all institutions should have clearly stated and readily accessible Policy relating to admission requirements.

3.1.4.7 Admission Policy should include specific provision of access for disadvantaged students, particularly in relation to fee paying courses, and should include recognition of prior learning as a means of meeting admission requirements.

### **3.1.5 Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning**

3.1.5.1 CAPA believes that significant improvements in credit transfer processes and recognition of prior learning are needed to improve access to and mobility within tertiary education, especially between TAFE and higher education.

3.1.5.2 CAPA believes that a soundly based credit transfer system must have the following characteristics:

- (a) national and state-wide data bases on credit transfer that ensure compatibility between institutions;
- (b) the production of accessible guides and documentation on credit transfer arrangements; and
- (c) the introduction of institutional appeal mechanisms where the onus of proof lies with the receiving institution as to why credit should not be granted rather with the student to show why credit should be granted.

3.1.5.3 CAPA believes that Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can play an important role in improving access to tertiary education by providing recognition of learning outside of institutional settings such as work based or community training and experience. CAPA is therefore opposed to measures which restrict access to assessment of prior learning such as the charging of fees or restrictive administrative arrangements.

3.1.5.4 CAPA believes that the national credit transfer agency should be administered by a Board which is representative of all higher education stakeholders.

### **3.1.6 Affirmative Action**

3.1.6.1 CAPA supports the principle of affirmative action and believes that positive systematic steps are required to achieve demonstrable progress towards equal educational and employment opportunity for identified equity groups.

3.1.6.2 CAPA believes that affirmative action provides the best method of achieving the necessary structural changes required for equal opportunity:

- (a) by requiring employers and educationalists to confront their Policy and practices;
- (b) by redressing the problems associated with the effects of past discrimination, and with discriminatory attitudes, practices and behaviour which persist long after the enactment of anti-discrimination laws;
- (c) by taking steps to ensure that future discrimination does not occur; and
- (d) by emphasising the importance of non-discriminatory language, (for example, non gender specific terminology), as a reflection of full and equal participation in lectures and tutorials, (both written and spoken

work), in policy documents, in tertiary institution publications, and in related or supported activities.

- 3.1.6.3 CAPA supports the Affirmative Action Agency and encourages it to consider both educational institutions, and the relationship between education and employment, in its deliberations.
- 3.1.6.4 CAPA condemns all discrimination on the basis of gender, and recognises that such discrimination is overwhelmingly suffered by women. CAPA recognises that isolated cases of discrimination against others also occur and are worthy of attention. Affirmative action Policy to redress systemic gender bias is not considered an instance of such discrimination.
- 3.1.6.5 CAPA believes that institutions should consult with disadvantaged students who suffer from discrimination and consider the broader implications of education policy in the development and implementation of affirmative action programs in areas such as:
- (a) admissions;
  - (b) assistance programs;
  - (c) student services;
  - (d) curriculum development;
  - (e) assessment;
  - (f) awarding scholarships;
  - (g) administrative practices;
  - (h) appointments; and
  - (i) promotions.

### **3.1.7 Students from Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds**

- 3.1.7.1 CAPA believes that the position of students from socio-economically-disadvantaged backgrounds has been marginalised from the higher education debate on equity. The equity review, 'Equality, Diversity and Excellence: Advancing the National Higher Education Equity Framework', highlighted the problems experienced by these students. However, at the institutional level, and especially in the context of upfront fee-paying, students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds continue to be ignored.
- 3.1.7.2 The under-enrolment and low participation rates of students from low socio-economic backgrounds become even more pronounced at the postgraduate level. CAPA believes that a significant shift in perceptions about postgraduate study, both within the higher education sector and the broader community, is necessary if there is to be any real change in the involvement of students from socio-economically-disadvantaged backgrounds in postgraduate study.
- 3.1.7.3 CAPA believes that students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds should not be penalised because of the previous Student Financial Supplement Scheme.

### **3.1.8 Students from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds**

- 3.1.8.1 CAPA urges all tertiary institution administrations to provide adequate preparatory programs to assist the entry of people from non-English speaking backgrounds into those institutions.

3.1.8.2 Such programs should include instruction in language skills and the technicalities of Australian academic learning structures and procedures.

3.1.8.3 CAPA believes it is vital and relevant that university and other tertiary institution administrations provide adequate cultural awareness and sensitising courses to all staff involved in teaching people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

### **3.1.9 Recognition of and Support for Carer Responsibilities**

3.1.9.1 CAPA believes that Childcare is an equity issue.

3.1.9.2 CAPA believes that postgraduates have a right to commit to study, family and career simultaneously and should not be forced into a position to have to decide between these paths. CAPA would support any initiatives to change the perception that this experience would not be possible.

3.1.9.3 CAPA recognises that family responsibilities are the concern of adults of both sexes, married or single. It is also aware that in practice the burden of childcare often remains with women. Whilst CAPA believes that the welfare of children is ultimately the responsibility of parents, it believes that the care of children is also a social responsibility and is therefore the concern of all postgraduates. CAPA thus recognises that a lack of flexible childcare facilities on campus and in the wider community constitutes a major obstacle to the access of women in particular to higher education.

3.1.9.4 CAPA affirms it is the role of the Federal Government to provide subsidised, affordable, flexible and accessible childcare facilities through tertiary institutions.

3.1.9.5 CAPA believes that University childcare policy should recognise the diversity of the needs based on differing cultural backgrounds and family structures.

3.1.9.6 CAPA believes that childcare responsibilities should be regarded as an acceptable reason for applying for suspension or extension of candidature, or for conversion to part-time studies. CAPA also believes that postgraduate scholarship providers should grant such leave and benefits which reasonably accommodate the competing roles of postgraduates and their domestic responsibilities.

3.1.9.7 All tertiary institutions should recognise that for a variety of reasons it may be necessary for children to accompany student parents onto campus. CAPA here believes that children should be allowed on campus provided they are adequately supervised by adults. CAPA also recognises that for occupational health and safety reasons there are places on campus that should remain off-limits to children.

3.1.9.8 CAPA believes that all concessions to postgraduate carers should be equitable and socio-economically conscious.

### **3.1.10 Student Fees**

#### **3.1.10.1 Principles**

3.1.10.1.1 Access to Higher Education in Australia is an inalienable right.

3.1.10.1.2 A high level of participation in higher education is of both public and private benefit. Such benefits may include but are not restricted to better health outcomes, higher income levels, higher levels of interpersonal trust and,

higher productivity levels across society.

- 3.1.10.1.3 Base public funding should at least match private contributions to higher education.
- 3.1.10.1.4 Every postgraduate course of study should include some publicly-funded places.
- 3.1.10.1.5 Direct fees are not the only cost of higher education incurred by graduate students. Private contributions may include but are not restricted to foregone income, personal research expenses, and childcare costs.
- 3.1.10.1.6 When setting fees, the capacity to pay should be balanced against the societal and individual consequences of carriage of debt after graduation.
- 3.1.10.1.7 The private cost of postgraduate education should reflect the real cost of course delivery. The higher capacity to earn in some fields should be addressed through a taxation system rather than through higher course fees.

### **3.1.10.2 Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS)**

- 3.1.10.2.1 CAPA opposes the levying of student fees through the Higher Education Contributions Scheme because:
  - (a) it entrenches the view that fee-paying for higher education is acceptable;
  - (b) it is predicated on the private gain of graduates being greater than that which is paid for ordinarily through the taxation system;
  - (c) the scheme has been easily manipulated to further increase revenue for higher education, by increasing costs to students;
  - (d) the scheme has been the precursor to the introduction of domestic fee paying places at both postgraduate and undergraduate level;
  - (e) HECS can act as a barrier to education, particularly for the socio-economically disadvantaged;
  - (f) graduates considering postgraduate study have already incurred a significant debt, and accruing a further one to four years debt is a significant disincentive to studying at the postgraduate level; and
  - (g) that the introduction of HECS has led to an acceptance that any growth in higher education should be funded through further increases in student contributions.
- 3.1.10.2.2 CAPA opposes the fall in the repayment threshold, the increase in levels of HECS and the introduction of differential HECS.
- 3.1.10.2.3 Consequently, CAPA calls for the abolition of the Higher Education Contribution Scheme.

## **3.2 International Postgraduates**

### **3.2.1 General Principles**

3.2.1.1 CAPA believes that all rights extended to local postgraduate students should be extended to all other postgraduate students including international and indigenous students.

### **3.2.2 Quality and Quality Assurance**

3.2.2.1 CAPA believes that Universities should ensure that increases in International Student numbers are adequately matched with increases in the resources available to International Students.

3.2.2.2 CAPA affirms the importance of particularly international students in the completion of Student Coursework Evaluation Questionnaire (SCEQ) for postgraduate coursework students.

3.2.2.3 CAPA feels it is critical that all universities collaboratively establish an acceptable national standard of academic English language skills.

3.2.2.4 CAPA affirms that all universities should develop and monitor comprehensive policies and undertake regular reviews and audits that relate to the employment contracts, practices and remuneration of student recruitment agents based overseas.

### **3.2.3 Fees and Charges**

3.2.3.1 CAPA is opposed to any type of discrimination or unfair treatment towards any person. CAPA is opposed to International Students being charged for Superannuation funds as they will not be able to utilise these funds.

3.2.3.2 CAPA recognises that the majority of International students are from less developed or developing countries. Students from these countries are known to have less economic resources and should not be subject to unreasonable economic discrimination. Furthermore, CAPA believes that international students are vital to cultural diversity as well as income generation. Excessive charges meted out to International students could hinder the growth of Australian Higher Education.

3.2.3.3 CAPA strongly opposes the introduction of full-cost courses and the retention of the overseas student charge that further reduces access to study in Australia. Overseas women will be specifically disadvantaged since their educational needs are generally undervalued on cultural, social and historical grounds. In addition, the types of full-cost fee courses are not usually those suited to the needs of women from overseas countries. CAPA recognises that these influences have resulted in a strong bias towards males within the overseas student populations studying in Australia. This inequity should not be perpetuated by Australian schemes. Affirmative action programs to recruit female overseas students should be pursued by Federal and State Governments alike.

### **3.2.4 Australian Visa Conditions and Requirements**

3.2.4.1 CAPA believes that International Student Visa requirements and processing should be the same for all International students regardless of country of origin.

- 3.2.4.2 CAPA believes that the *ESOS Act 2000* should not be used to enforce a discriminatory migration policy, as this purpose is in direct conflict with the consumer protection provisions of the Act.
- 3.2.4.3 CAPA believes that international students should have the right to complete the course of study and defer graduation until university fees and fines are paid. CAPA deplores the Federal Government's policy of immediately deporting overseas students who are unable to meet the OSC payment deadline; and
- 3.2.4.4 CAPA believes that international students should have the right to remain in Australia until their thesis has been examined and a final decision made.
- 3.2.4.5 CAPA asserts that where the *ESOS Act* requires Universities to notify the Department of Immigration with respect to unsatisfactory progress, resulting in a breach of visa requirements, that such notification must take place only after all avenues of appeal and final determination of appeals with respect to unsatisfactory progress have taken place.
- 3.2.4.6 CAPA believes there should be no restrictions on the work rights of holders of an International Student Visa.
- 3.2.4.7 CAPA affirms that all postgraduate students who have submitted their final assignments or theses should have the option for a visa extension until the University declares that all requirements of the degree are met or internal appeal/review processes are exhausted

### **3.2.5 Employment Opportunities**

- 3.2.5.1 CAPA believes that both the Australian community and international students benefit from the opportunity for international students to apply the knowledge they have gained from their postgraduate study by undertaking related employment in Australia at the completion of their degree.

### **3.2.6 The Provision of Inadequate or Misleading Information**

- 3.2.6.1 CAPA notes the obligations of the universities to their international students under the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students, contained in the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000. CAPA particularly notes the obligation of universities to provide accurate information to prospective students. However, CAPA also notes that there is demonstrable evidence of potential students being given misinformation, and/or facts being omitted, by some agents. As such, CAPA supports the return of the marketing and recruitment of higher education institutions to the educational cultural attaché of the countries embassy, as was previously.
- 3.2.6.2 The misinformation that many postgraduates may receive before arriving in Australia often leads to feelings of disappointment and cause unnecessary distress after arrival. In order to improve the information available to students, CAPA recommends that universities provide prospective international students with at least the following unambiguous, up to date and complete information in plain English no later than the offer of admission as a matter of policy:

- (a) housing information, local cost and alternative forms of accommodation;

- (b) academic system: the emphasis on the one to one student-adviser relationship, expectations of independent learning, assessment, as well as standards for English writing skills;
- (c) admission criteria: that students be correctly and accurately informed of the equivalence and acceptability of foreign qualifications and the possibility of credit transfers;
- (d) realistic and complete information about work rights for students and their partners;
- (e) school fees for the children of international students;
- (f) information about support services provided by student associations;
- (g) complete and detailed information on childcare, health insurance, visa fees, transport and living expenses; and
- (h) rights and responsibilities of international students.

3.2.6.3 CAPA believes it must be mandatory for universities to develop a comprehensive policy on international fee paying students which is incorporated into their marketing materials in order to prevent misleading advertising and promotion. Such policy should:

- (a) ensure that international students be made aware by the relevant institutions and Government departments of their rights and responsibilities as postgraduates in Australian institutions, prior to candidature; and
- (b) require universities to provide free specialised language assistance, academic support and advocacy services for international fee paying postgraduate students.

### **3.2.7 Family and Carer Responsibilities**

3.2.7.1 CAPA believes that DEEWR should broaden the definition of "dependant" in regard to international students to include a family member or a person recognised as "dependant" in the student's culture.

3.2.7.2 CAPA is opposed to the payment of state school fees by international students for their dependents

### **3.2.8 Orientation, Induction and Cultural Awareness**

3.2.8.1 CAPA recommends that culturally diverse issues regarding sexual and reproductive health be included in the orientation process utilising appropriate qualified services and resources

3.2.8.2 CAPA believes that each University should provide cross-cultural awareness training to both Staff and Students.

3.2.8.3 CAPA believes it critical that all the universities provide and explain to international postgraduate students the University policy on racism.

## **3.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Postgraduates**

### **3.3.1 Preamble**

3.3.1.1 Australia has two broad cultural groups who are its original inhabitants. The Torres Strait Islander peoples who are the original inhabitants of the Torres Strait Islands and the Aboriginal peoples who are the original inhabitants of the rest of

Australia. Both cultures are uniquely rich and complex with sophisticated social organisations, ideologies and technologies which distinguish one from the other. There are however common characteristics, such as languages and customs.

- 3.3.1.2 Each cultural group has subcultures, which are distinguished by their 'country' or 'language' name. Country refers to the geographical location of a language group. The terminology 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' and 'Indigenous Australians' are labels given to the original inhabitants to classify and separate our cultures. When visiting a country, the terminology that is acceptable by the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be the name used when referring to those local people. Nevertheless 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' is preferred to the use of the term 'Indigenous'. Verbalising the acronym "ATSI" is considered culturally insensitive.
- 3.3.1.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate students are faced with difficulties in maintaining:
- (a) a balance between their cultural dignity based on individual identities and scholastic requirements based on traditional Western paradigms; and
  - (b) an obligation to oral traditions verses academic literary tradition.
- 3.3.1.4 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, as with other postgraduate students, should be able to construct theoretical frameworks that utilise their own cultural knowledge, skills and social constructs.
- 3.3.1.5 Equity that includes reconciliation of all Australians can only be achieved when non-Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Australians consider the attitudes, beliefs and understandings of the original inhabitants of Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. Further, they should consider their place in devising effective ways in which they can walk hand-in-hand with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian people.
- 3.3.1.6 This will require an acknowledgment, recognition and observance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, languages, historical contexts, knowledge, and protocols. It also requires the sharing of this information in a manner that does not compromise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 3.3.1.7 CAPA upholds that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples have never ceded ownership of their traditional lands. Therefore we uphold the sovereignties of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples over their traditional lands, and actively supports the development of projects fostering the awareness and promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island sovereignties in the wider community.
- 3.3.1.8 We uphold that other Australians have much to learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples, and will actively encourage the development of programs and Policy to enhance this learning process. In order to do this, it must be acknowledged that the academic systems in Australia is Eurocentric and thereby disadvantages both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples and other Australians. CAPA upholds that all Australians have a valued voice in the construction of Australia's and the World's knowledge pool. Valuing voices, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples mutually benefits all Australians.
- 3.3.1.9 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples may have different aspirations from those provided by mainstream tertiary education. Equal opportunity to

succeed in tertiary education therefore often means different procedures and processes to achieve equality of educational outcomes. CAPA acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Peoples are striving for culturally appropriate provision of education, as a means of facilitating self-determination, cultural preservation and future survival. We also acknowledge self-determination in education as control over 'construction of identity' which involves Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples writing their own knowledge traditions. We further acknowledge self-determination as the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples to make decisions on issues relating to them and to manage their own affairs.

- 3.3.1.10 That CAPA recognises the unique disadvantaged position that Indigenous – Australian Post Graduate Students are in when pursuing a higher education. That their employment rate is far lower than their fellow non-indigenous students. Therefore CAPA is directed to lobby the Federal & State ministers for Education and Indigenous Affairs and the Vice Chancellors of the various Institutions to prioritise Postgraduate Indigenous employment in the institutions and education sector generally
- 3.3.1.11 NIPAAAC and CAPA are concerned that Indigenous-Australian postgraduate students, particularly those who are single and/or supporting children, are unable to meet basic living expenses and the high course costs associated with Masters and Doctorate degrees on current ABSTUDY rates. A tax-free 'living wage' plus additional components for travel and study costs should be made available to all Indigenous-Australian Masters, Doctorate and Honours degree students. An additional payment should be provided for each dependent child. It should be noted that the living wage should be based on conservative living estimates, and NIPAAAC and CAPA's longer-term goal is to attain higher levels of student income support
- 3.3.1.12 CAPA believes that the education of all Indigenous-Australian children in their sense of self worth and of Aboriginal culture and language is paramount.
- 3.3.1.13 CAPA endorses the 21 recommendations of the CAPA Response to the Indigenous Perspectives of Postgraduate Education (October 1996) together with the 28 recommendations of that report and the 5 recommendations in Appendix 5 of that report.
- 3.3.1.14 CAPA supports NIPAAAC's membership of the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC), which makes recommendations to the Minister of Education on the awarding of staff scholarships, develops strategies for increasing the number of Indigenous-Australian staff in higher education, and convenes an annual conference to develop Indigenous-Australian higher education strategies. CAPA and NIPAAAC believe that the IHEAC should be given more funding and a greater role in order to become the umbrella organization for the development of all Indigenous-Australian higher education policies.
- 3.3.1.15 CAPA believes each University should revive Access and Participation committees with strong local Indigenous community representation.
- 3.3.1.16 CAPA believes all institutions and management of the same must establish their roles in supporting the growth and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate study and research and support systems for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands People students and provide regular courses to all academic and regular staff involved in teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands People students. CAPA believes that better strategies should

provide support to Aboriginal support units, together with working to recognise the following:

- (a) presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders;
- (b) staffing;
- (c) culture of the University;
- (d) information technology;
- (e) research funding;
- (f) equal employment opportunities; and
- (g) rights and diversity.

3.3.1.17 CAPA affirms development of understandings of academic definitions to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural ways of seeing, communicating and learning. Further, CAPA recognises the need of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate students to demonstrate their learning through a range of mediums other than a written thesis or in ways that compliments the written thesis.

3.3.1.18 CAPA believes it is critical that universities include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural ways of seeing, communicating and learning by accepting alternative methods of assessment of their knowledge.

3.3.1.19 CAPA supports the compulsory inclusion of anti-racist, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and cross-cultural education within courses for potential academics, teachers and other professionals, and within student organisations throughout all tertiary institutions.

### **3.3.2 Recognition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sovereignty**

3.3.2.1 CAPA recognises Aboriginal sovereignty, and actively supports the development of projects fostering the awareness and promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sovereignty amongst its constituents and the wider community.

### **3.3.3 Memorandums of Understanding Between Indigenous-Australian and non-Indigenous-Australian Organisations**

3.3.3.1 CAPA believes that each public university campus in Australia must have the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' flags flying next to the Australian flag. Furthermore, that each campus must acknowledge the Indigenous-Australian traditional owners of the area and Indigenous-Australian students of the university. This acknowledgement must provide information on the culture and be easily accessible and viewable

3.3.3.2 CAPA recognises that Indigenous Australia has unique cultural protocols that should be respected. It advocates that postgraduate bodies are encouraging to, and respectful of, Indigenous-Australian postgraduate students, and recommends that PGAs adopt and/or acknowledge those protocols where appropriate.

3.3.3.3 CAPA recognises the importance of Indigenous-Australian representation in all PGAs given the unique position Indigenous-Australians hold in Australia

- 3.3.3.4 CAPA recognises the importance of establishing a memorandum of understanding with the traditional custodians of the lands university campuses are built on.

### **3.3.4 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in universities**

- 3.3.4.1 CAPA believes that University and Government negotiation and consultation processes (with Indigenous communities) need to be further developed, coordinated and formalised in order to better engage Indigenous educators, students and communities in the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education strategies. Opportunities for Indigenous educators and Indigenous organisations to communicate with each other, share ideas and coordinate strategies also need to be improved.

### **3.3.5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male students**

- 3.3.5.1 CAPA is concerned that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male students are under-represented in postgraduate and undergraduate education in comparison to women students. Currently male students make up approximately 35% of Indigenous postgraduate students, and their participation has steadily declined since 1999.

### **3.3.6 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness as core Undergraduate studies**

- 3.3.6.1 Most undergraduate students do not have a deep understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history, and of the factors which have put Indigenous peoples in positions of socio-economic disadvantage. As a result, non-Indigenous students' perceptions of, and interactions with, Indigenous students are often still influenced by racist stereotypes.
- 3.3.6.2 CAPA believes that a key way to give substance to the reconciliation statements held by many Australian universities would be to establish a requirement for all students to receive education about core issues of relevance to our Indigenous peoples. Core Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies should be introduced at undergraduate level because of the logistical number of Australians it would influence, and because it would better prepare postgraduate students for conducting social research relevantly and safely.
- 3.3.6.3 Importantly, Torres Strait Islander cultures and peoples should be seen in their own right as an Indigenous identity that is separate from and different to the Aboriginal peoples of mainland Australia. It is essential that cultural education programs do not assume that they can generally relate Aboriginal perspectives to Torres Strait Islander perspectives. Separate components of Aboriginal perspectives and Torres Strait Islander perspectives must therefore be attended to in curricula and program development.
- 3.3.6.4 CAPA and NIPAAAC are supportive of efforts at certain universities, such as Charles Darwin University and Curtin University of Technology, to include Indigenous-Australian studies as core course content to which undergraduate students are exposed at Bachelor Degree level. Further, CAPA and NIPAAAC recognise that a majority of higher education institutions now include a requirement for undergraduate students to undertake lectures or units in Indigenous-Australian studies in professional service delivery areas such as health, education, law and medicine, and increasingly in courses such as environment and sustainability and community development. It is noted that

nearly all Australian universities are also making efforts to embed Indigenous-Australian perspectives across the curriculum in most faculties and courses.

### **3.3.7 Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme**

3.3.7.1 CAPA and NIPAAAC believe that the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS) tuition should be granted to postgraduate students. Currently, tuition is available only under certain circumstances, namely when a student is looking like they will fail a course. This poses a problem for the large number of Indigenous-Australian postgraduate students who attain entry to coursework studies through Recognised Prior Learning. Proving a need for tuition at postgraduate level is difficult in the context of competition with undergraduate students for the services. It is therefore necessary for the amount of funding available under ATAS to be increased, and for postgraduate students to have fuller access to the program.

### **3.3.8 Co-supervision and mentoring**

3.3.8.1 CAPA feels it is vital Universities accept the need for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate students to have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander co-supervisors from their field who are paid as staff from their University of enrolment.

3.3.8.2 CAPA affirms the need for Indigenous Support Units to employ and resource a knowledgeable community member to mentor Indigenous students.

### **3.3.9 Education Textbook Subsidy Scheme**

3.3.9.1 NIPAAAC and CAPA express their dismay that the Federal Government ended the Education Textbook Subsidy Scheme (ETSS) in 2004. The ETSS was introduced to compensate students for the extra price on books imposed through the GST. The price of textbooks has increased by 8% with the closure of the scheme, which has created an additional financial burden on students.

## **3.4 Women Postgraduates**

### **3.4.1 General Principles**

3.4.1.1 CAPA opposes tertiary education fees and charges and believes that it specifically disadvantages women for the following reasons:

- (a) women as a group are economically disadvantaged. Education charges and fees exacerbate the situation of women and their dependents who may be financially dependent on others;
- (b) most single parents are women, in such cases fees and charges place an additional financial burden on single mothers and deter them from entering or completing postgraduate education;
- (c) women are already faced with substantial disincentives to undertake tertiary education. In particular, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women from ethnic language backgrounds other than English, women from lower socioeconomic groups, mature-age women, women with children, women in rural and remote locations, women with disabilities or otherwise marginalised women may be further discouraged by tertiary education fees;
- (d) The introduction of the PELS will result in women having greater difficulty than men would in making repayments; and

- (e) the indexations on the Higher Education Contribution Scheme will have an adverse impact on women entering higher education due to income inequities and the interrupted nature of women's working lives.
- 3.4.1.2 CAPA recognises that the absence of income support for all postgraduate students and the lack of income support, in particular, disadvantages women.
- 3.4.1.3 CAPA welcomes institutional and Federal Government initiatives to attract women into non-traditional areas of study. However, CAPA rejects any devaluing of the Humanities and associated areas where women are concentrated. Institutions must also recognise that women entering non-traditional areas of study require continuing support to progress in, and complete their courses, specifically in relation to sexual harassment and victimisation in such disciplines, and the gendered knowledge, attitudes and assumptions within non-traditional fields.
- 3.4.1.4 CAPA endorses the protection of courses informed by women's distinct and culturally diverse experiences. Further, CAPA endorses the protection of the full range of courses informed by gender critiques.
- 3.4.1.5 CAPA affirms the inclusion of the priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women postgraduate students and acknowledges the special measures required to achieve equity and access to higher education.
- 3.4.1.6 CAPA is concerned about the impact of racism on women from non-English speaking and culturally diverse groups and will work with various international student groups and concerned constituents to address this problem on all campuses.
- 3.4.1.7 CAPA acknowledges the need for greater awareness of the issues faced by postgraduate women with disabilities and special needs, and carers, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and queer postgraduate women.
- 3.4.1.8 CAPA acknowledges the special requirements of women with mental health concerns or physical challenges and supports the women's caucus in its endeavours to ensure that these issues are fully addressed on each campus.
- 3.4.1.9 CAPA recognises that women are more likely to remain in casual employment for long periods and experience it as their actual career. Women are concentrated in untenured low-level academic positions. These areas are not generally considered to be 'productive' and receive fewer research grants. As academic promotions stress research output, these women are disadvantaged.
- 3.4.1.10 CAPA values the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by the Australian Government and acknowledges this convention as the benchmark standard for achieving equity for women.
- 3.4.1.11 CAPA deplores the refusal of the Australian Government to ratify the optional protocols relating to CEDAW.
- 3.4.1.12 CAPA believes that women have a right to enjoy study, family and a career simultaneously and should not be forced into a position to have to decide between these paths. CAPA would support any initiatives to change the perception that this experience would not be possible.

- 3.4.1.13 CAPA encourages individual faculties and schools to provide flexible PhD and Masters research courses to women with parental and/or carer responsibilities.
- 3.4.1.14 CAPA encourages that women be offered full-time permanent employment with the opportunity to job-share this position. CAPA believes this job-sharing should not disadvantage women in terms of job security, superannuation, annual leave, maternity leave and other related conditions.
- 3.4.1.15 CAPA endorses that women returning from maternity leave should be entitled to a flexible re-entry into their study and/or employment
- 3.4.1.16 CAPA recognizes that with the diminishing Government funding to universities, there are increased rates of casualisation and that women are more likely to remain in casual employment for long periods and experience it as their actual career.
- 3.4.1.17 CAPA supports any initiatives that encourage women in attempts to move forward from concentrations of untenured low-level academic positions.
- 3.4.1.18 CAPA believes women have the right of self-determination, including choosing and planning when and if to have children. CAPA opposes any measures to erode the current rights of women in this area which could be detrimental to women's participation in higher education.
- 3.4.1.19 CAPA supports women participating in such 'non-traditional areas', and believes there should be support provided to overcome difficulties such as isolation and direct / indirect discrimination due to misconceptions by others and a paucity of women role models.
- 3.4.1.20 CAPA believes that the potential financial impact of the Postgraduate Education Loans Scheme (PELS) may negatively affect postgraduate coursework students, particularly women.
- 3.4.1.21 CAPA is concerned about the potential financial impact of Fee-HELP on postgraduate coursework students, particularly women
- 3.4.1.22 CAPA feels it is vital that universities, DEEWR and other scholarship providers increase the flexibility of scholarships in terms of mode of study, completion times, suspensions and other forms of leave, to increase the participation of women.
- 3.4.1.23 CAPA supports the principle of women's networks and support groups on University campuses
- 3.4.1.24 CAPA supports the principle of provision of dedicated autonomous space for women students with resources relating to health, domestic violence, accommodation, etc, on campus
- 3.4.1.25 CAPA supports free, safe, and accessible abortion for all women on demand and that a lack of access leads to significant educational disadvantage.
- 3.4.1.26 CAPA urges that international and domestic postgraduate students not be disadvantaged by maternity requirements regarding leave, enrolment, and visa applications.

### **3.4.2 Equal Opportunity in Education**

- 3.4.2.1 CAPA believes that there should be equal opportunity and access to all areas of training and education including education for personal development. CAPA further believes there should be provisions for re-entry for women whose career paths have been interrupted.
- 3.4.2.2 CAPA encourages individual Faculties and Schools to provide flexible PhD and Masters Research courses to women with parental and/or carer responsibilities.

### **3.4.3 Vocational Guidance**

- 3.4.3.1 CAPA believes that the education system should provide vocational guidance about all available training and career opportunities to women of all ages and backgrounds, especially those returning to education. Education counsellors should provide women with knowledge of prerequisites required in all areas of study thus allowing the greatest flexibility of choice in career paths.

### **3.4.4 Curricula**

- 3.4.4.1 CAPA believes that both curriculum and training methods should be reviewed at all levels of the education and training system, and, where necessary, be re-written in line with sensitivity to the separate and distinct experiences of women and men of all cultures.

### **3.4.5 Encouragement**

- 3.4.5.1 CAPA believes that education counsellors and the trade union movement should give active encouragement to women who wish to enter areas of training, employment and apprenticeships in which women have low representation and masculine modes of practice are dominant.

### **3.4.6 Women's Studies**

- 3.4.6.1 CAPA believes that it is essential that research and teaching in the areas of Women's Studies be encouraged at all levels. This includes the setting up and maintenance of Women's Studies research centres and courses, and increasing the visibility of the specific contribution and needs of women across the broad spectrum of all disciplines.
- 3.4.6.2 CAPA recognises that "women" are a heterogeneous group, who might or might not share one or more forms of experiential commonalities; but who can also experience different forms of discrimination due to factors relating to phenotype, culture, spiritual conviction, etc.
- 3.4.6.3 CAPA believes that "Women's Studies" (also known as "Gender Studies") is important for understanding and addressing gender equality and other equity issues, and supports Australian and International research, which illustrates that the cultural, ethnic etc specificity of certain women remains largely excluded from "Women's Studies" curricula, and therefore subsumes the latter's realities.
- 3.4.6.4 CAPA supports and asserts that the relevancy of "Women's Studies" is also decided by the contents of "Women's Studies" curricula.
- 3.4.6.5 In order for "Women's Studies" to achieve the highest possible degree of relevance to the diversity of ALL women in Australia and their contexts, CAPA

supports "Women's Studies" programs, and values their implementation nationally to broaden the currently limited content of these programs to better include modules which reflect the diversity of women in Australia in order to better ensure relevancy and inclusion.

### **3.4.7 Access**

3.4.7.1 CAPA is committed to investigating and implementing a policy that acknowledges the difficulties faced by women who are prevented from fully accessing resources and participating in higher education due to a variety of lifestyle, cultural identity and background, social, economic and geographic realities.

### **3.4.8 Women in Information Technology**

3.4.8.1 The relative absence of women within this rapidly developing world is striking and CAPA Women's Committee believes that specific strategies should re-address these inequities. In dissolving these barriers between women and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) CAPA should consider the following:

- (a) that specific action policy should be developed each year until an equal balance in ICT participation is achieved;
- (b) that ICT plays a special role in eliminating isolation, promoting collegiality and empowering women to mix home, work and study; and
- (c) that the special role that ICT plays on the future of postgraduate women as researchers and professionals should be further researched to order to understand and monitor identifiable barriers.

3.4.8.2 CAPA believes that education and training in ICT is essential skill to equip women graduates for life-long learning and professional and personal life.

### **3.4.9 Trans-disciplinary Research**

3.4.9.1 CAPA supports and encourages women involved with inter- or trans-disciplinary research, explicitly recognising the potential that this collaboration offers for women to become involved in/with disciplines where they are under-represented, and for individual women to:

- (a) raise their profile;
- (b) gain access to funding, resources and methods;
- (c) promote and become involved with research of an holistic nature; and
- (d) make contact with mentors from other departments/faculties.

## **3.5 Queer Postgraduates**

### **3.5.1 Definition**

3.5.1.1 The term "queer" is as defined in the Regulations

3.5.1.2 CAPA recognises and celebrates the sexuality, sex, and or gender diversity within the postgraduate community. CAPA acknowledges that queer postgraduate students may have distinct and different concerns and

experiences. CAPA adopts the following Policy in order to be strongly and visibly inclusive and supportive of queer postgraduate students and staff.

### **3.5.2 Statement**

- 3.5.2.1 CAPA acknowledges that people who are queer have suffered a history of legal, social, economic and institutional discrimination based on non-heteronormative identity and/or practices. This includes homophobic and other anti-queer harassment and bullying continue to be an endemic problem at all levels of the education system and are still inadequately addressed.
- 3.5.2.2 CAPA recognises that our society prescribes a hegemonic heterosexual identity. This hegemony includes social institutions such as marriage and rigid gender roles and reinforced by the denial, stigmatisation and punishment of alternative possibilities (such as queer). These punishments may be applied the state or by civil society in the form of discrimination, intimidation or violence. CAPA believes that this oppresses queer and many non-queer people, by forcing them into a particular way of life.
- 3.5.2.3 CAPA does not believe heterosexuality to be superior to any other sexual identity or way of life; queer sexualities and identities are equally valid. CAPA shall never assume that anyone or any group, is limited by their sexual identity or orientation, or is by default heterosexual. CAPA believes that all people should have equal rights regardless of sexual identity, and opposes all discourses, institutions or structures that privilege heterosexuality or penalise queerness. CAPA recognises that the heterosexist nature of society disadvantages queer people, and supports and condemns violence, intimidation or discrimination against any person or group on the basis of their real or perceived sexual identity or group.
- 3.5.2.4 CAPA condemns homophobia and recognises that homophobia has severe mental health impacts on some students.
- 3.5.2.5 CAPA supports campaigns against homophobia and about discrimination issues within universities and in the wider community.
- 3.5.2.6 CAPA supports the campaign for full legal equality for Queer people, including marriage and adoption rights. CAPA recognises that many postgraduate students are older students who may be more likely to be faced with issues of family, child rearing, and the establishment and recognition of these relationships. Accordingly, CAPA views the support of this campaign as particularly relevant for postgraduate representative bodies.
- 3.5.2.7 CAPA supports queer blocs in protests and rallies.
- 3.5.2.8 CAPA recognises the spectrum of gender identity, especially those who identify as transgendered, support all transgendered people in having their preferred gender listed on all official documents, including those for University records, and condemns all forms where a gender binary is insisted upon.

### **3.5.3 Discrimination**

- 3.5.3.1 CAPA does not accept or tolerate any form of prejudice or discrimination based on sexual orientation. CAPA shall ensure that Universities include queer issues in their anti-discrimination practices, Policy and publications. CAPA views as equal the lifestyle choices of individual constituents and recognises that all

staff and constituents have the right to be "out" in the workplace or in their University studies, respectively.

- 3.5.3.2 CAPA recognises that recent changes to social security legislation, passed by the Federal government as part of an effort to 'eliminate discrimination' against Queers, have led to an unfortunate consequence that many Queer postgraduates in de facto relationships may now have their social security payments reduced.  
The reduction of payments for de facto or married students also tends to discriminate against women students who are more likely to be considered the 'dependant' half of non-queer relationships.  
CAPA asserts that the provision of income support for students should not vary according to their relationship status, and specifically no student should receive a lesser payment as a consequence of their relationship.
- 3.5.3.3 CAPA supports same-sex postgraduates with children, acknowledging that there are difficult circumstances for the provision of entitlements and there is no Federal recognition of the joint parenthood. To this effect, CAPA pursues equitable rights for all parents in Australia, regardless of gender identity, sexuality, employment, or scholarly pursuit.
- 3.5.3.4 CAPA recognises the challenges for same-sex couples from an international background who have come to Australia to study, and pursues the Federal Government and Universities to provide support for all partners of postgraduate student equality.

#### **3.5.4 University Policy**

- 3.5.4.1 CAPA strongly supports constituent organisations in encouraging their Universities, faculties and departments to adopt and maintain Policy inclusive of the need of queer students and staff.
- 3.5.4.2 CAPA affirms that queer postgraduate students employed by universities are entitled to expect their departments to provide a safe and non-discriminatory working environment.
- 3.5.4.3 CAPA encourages all postgraduate students employed in a teaching role to recognise they are likely to have queer students in their classes. All teaching staff should use inclusive language and should not assume a heterosexual audience.
- 3.5.4.4 CAPA encourages universities to fund and support development programs for teaching staff, and endorses the inclusion of anti-homophobia and other "diversity" workshops in such training.

#### **3.5.5 Academic relationships**

- 3.5.5.1 CAPA recognises that queer-focused postgraduate research will sometimes generate specific and complex difficulties that would be ameliorated by ensuring that the supervisory relationship be non-discriminatory or pro-actively queer-friendly.
- 3.5.5.2 CAPA supports training for all supervisors, encourages universities to fund and support supervisor development programs, and endorses the inclusion of anti-homophobia and other "diversity" workshops in such training.

### 3.5.6 Placement

- 3.5.6.1 CAPA endorses the right of all queer postgraduate students to an equal opportunity in any external activity that is part of their program of study, including placement. CAPA encourages universities and relevant faculties and departments to ensure queer postgraduate students receive fair, equal and non-discriminatory treatment by all organisations that host placements.

### 3.5.7 Queer International Postgraduates

- 3.5.7.1 CAPA recognises that queer international postgraduate students have needs that are unique to queer domestic students and heterosexual international students. These needs are often overlooked by efforts to address queer issues and international student issues.
- 3.5.7.2 CAPA recognises that queer international postgraduate students face, among other issues, cultural, linguistic and social differences to the Australian mainstream, which may represent difficulties and/or inequities that need to be addressed.
- 3.5.7.3 CAPA recognises that queer international postgraduate students potentially face several forms of discrimination due to the multiplicity of their identities, and that such discrimination must be addressed.

### 3.5.8 Facilities for Queer Postgraduate Students

- 3.5.8.1 There should be a queer-safe space centrally located on the university campus. This space should be designed to create a level playing field for all students by minimising the effects of homophobia that are a recognised barrier to study. The queer space should:
- 3.5.8.1.1 Be within a short distance (5 minutes walk) to security;
  - 3.5.8.1.2 Have a secondary entrance that doubles as an emergency exit;
  - 3.5.8.1.3 Be capable of holding at least 15 people with a minimum of 16 metres;
  - 3.5.8.1.4 Have an internal phone for calling security;
  - 3.5.8.1.5 Be a permanent room set aside for this and no other purpose, set aside for the use of queer students and their guests;
  - 3.5.8.1.6 Confirm to OH&S standards.
- 3.5.8.2 CAPA supports the establishment and maintenance of Queer Networks at University, Region, State, and a National level that target postgraduate students, and that the Queer Officer will work towards helping student organisation maintain effective modes of communication
- 3.5.8.3 CAPA should work with affiliate organisations to develop queer representation and the potential for future development.

## 3.6 Postgraduates Who Have Disabilities

- 3.6.1 In all cases, students who have a disability must be self-identified. Neither CAPA, the University nor any other body has the right to apply or withhold this

identification to any individual. Further, a student who has an impairment is not necessarily disabled by university practices, and thus notification of such impairment shall not be indicative of disability for the purposes of university enrolment targets.

- 3.6.2 CAPA recognises that the number of postgraduate students who have disabilities is growing, and that this group has growing needs that must be addressed. This also includes encouraging universities to actively recruit and support people who have disabilities.
- 3.6.3 Postgraduate students have different needs: Universities must provide postgraduate specific services for postgraduate students who have specific needs, whether or not the individual believes s/he is disabled by university practices. It is likely that if students who have a disability are having problems with an aspect of the university system, many other students are also experiencing difficulties. CAPA believes that universities must implement systematic equity and access Policy to address the issues and requirements of postgraduate students who have a range of disabilities for the benefit of the whole University population.
- 3.6.4 CAPA recognises that the majority of impairments that disable postgraduate students are invisible; e.g. Arthritis and/or chronic pain, learning disabilities and/or mental health conditions.
- 3.6.5 CAPA believes that all Universities should provide appropriate staff development including informing staff of the invisible nature of most disabilities. Furthermore on a student disclosing a disability to a supervisor, the supervisor shall have further training and support including knowledge of the appropriate referral.
- 3.6.6 CAPA believes that all universities should provide appropriate staff development to academic and general staff on disability issues. Appropriate training includes relevant campus and off-campus referral.
- 3.6.7 CAPA supports the disability officer in their investigation and development of resources to support PGAs to reduce the structural and local barriers to the education of postgraduates with disabilities, with particular reference to the Disabilities Discrimination Act and DEEWR Data Collections
- 3.6.8 CAPA notes that, according to the ABS, at least 20% of the population of Australia identify as having a disability, and many disabilities are invisible. With this in mind, CAPA recommends that universities should assume that they have a substantial population of staff and students with disabilities and structure their activities and provide resources accordingly.

### **3.7 Students with Mental Health Concerns**

- 3.7.1 In light of the historical and continuing disadvantages suffered by people with continuing, periodic or short-term mental health concerns in the community, CAPA recognises that postgraduate students with mental health concerns have both hidden and deeply imbedded concerns that must be addressed.
- 3.7.2 CAPA also recognises that there are several negative consequences for identifying themselves, therefore for people with mental health concerns self-identification is problematic.

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- 3.7.3 As universities are site risk to the mental health of postgraduate students, CAPA encourages universities to have active, non-discriminatory support measures for mental health concerns.
  - 3.7.4 CAPA realises mental health concerns can impact on many areas of a student's life including their academic outcomes.
  - 3.7.5 CAPA acknowledges that students with mental health concerns should have numerous forms of support available to them including special consideration and reasonable adjustment policy which recommends flexibility when dealing with mental health concerns; postgraduate staff and student organisation staff adequately trained in mental health concerns.

### **3.8 Off-Campus, Distance Education, Rural and Isolated Students**

- 3.8.1 CAPA believes that institutions should make every effort to ensure that students who by necessity or choice study in the external mode are not disadvantaged because they study away from a campus. This is best achieved by the development of a policy on off-campus and distance education students which recognises their special circumstances, and which acknowledges the need to provide these students with appropriate support.
- 3.8.2 Off-campus, distance education, rural, and isolated postgraduate students should have comparable levels of access to internal students - to library facilities, information technology and income support arrangements such as scholarships.
- 3.8.3 Consistent with CAPA's policy on user-pays funding arrangements, external students should not be subjected to additional imposts in order to gain access to university or other facilities required to effectively pursue their course of study.
- 3.8.4 CAPA recognises that students from rural and isolated backgrounds have equity needs that need to be actively addressed in university's policy and practices.
- 3.8.5 CAPA believes that detention or incarceration should not constitute a barrier to Higher Education.  
CAPA therefore, opposes university policies, procedures or practices that:
  - (a) are designed to profit from the provision of educational services to incarcerated students, and /or
  - (b) deny education to incarcerated students with limited or no access to email, internet or other technological infrastructure.

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## 4 Higher Education Structure, Governance and Quality Assurance

### 4.1 Universities and Other Higher Education Providers

#### 4.1.1 Private and Joint Public/Private Institutions

4.1.1.1 CAPA believes that private tertiary institutions should not receive funding from the Australian taxpayer via any form of government subsidy, since these institutions undermine the provision of publicly funded, accessible higher education.

4.1.1.2 CAPA believes that the establishment of private or joint public/private institutions:

- (a) will further diminish the current inadequate standard of access to higher education for lower income groups, women and ethnic and racial minorities;
- (b) will, by charging tuition fees, exclude from education those unable to pay. Moreover, a private tertiary education sector cannot effectively be brought to account over matters of discrimination, much less be required to adopt measures to redress the effects of long-standing and often indirect discrimination;
- (c) will result, if allowed to develop without strict controls, in lower academic standards. Within the private tertiary education system, the exigencies of profit-making are likely to lead to cost cutting in areas of student services, class sizes, a more compressed curriculum and more superficial tuition, lower entry requirements and lower failure rates in an attempt to maintain student enrolments;
- (d) will lead to a decline of standards within the public system through the shifting of resources to the private sector;
- (e) will threaten current inadequate standards of intellectual freedom in all institutions. Within the private sector, corporate bodies will be empowered to direct academic effort, course content and research activities;
- (f) will further bias the content and role of higher education towards the needs and interests of the private sector. Market oriented courses of immediate profit to institutions and/or private business will be funded preferentially, while other curricula, which may benefit the broader community will be demoted;
- (g) will make the higher education system less accountable and responsive to the needs and interest of the broader community. The private sector will not be answerable to any representative central planning body. Its aim will be to turn a profit or to support business interests without adequate regard to issues of equity, breadth of curriculum or social need which are the concerns of a democratic community;
- (h) will reduce industrial standards for the employment of academic staff, reflected particularly in the shift towards contract labour which can be reduced more easily in line with market fluctuations; and

- (i) will draw inevitably on existing public resources without providing sufficient off-setting benefits to the community. Fees levied by the private sector will not be sufficient to cover major infrastructure costs. These will generally be provided by the public resulting in a public subsidy of private profit-making institutions. Moreover, it is likely that private sector institutions would attract additional Federal subsidies, particularly through access to student assistance and research grant schemes.

4.1.1.3 CAPA opposes the public cross-subsidisation of private profit making enterprises, and believes that only a public higher education system can deliver accessible education for all students.

## 4.2 Commercial Practices

### 4.2.1 For-Profit Education

4.2.1.1 CAPA notes the extensive scale of the development of commercial and for-profit courses in the postgraduate and continuing education sector. With the application of new media technologies to the delivery of these courses this market no longer respects the borders of state and national Governments. It is further noted that this market involves a broad spectrum of entities, including institutions whose core role is the public provision of higher education, commercial education companies, and multi-national corporations. These various players may act as providers of a total package or as providers of producer services to other entities.

4.2.1.2 Current Australian regulatory, quality control and funding mechanisms are not adequate to the task of ensuring that students are protected from bad practice on the part of this form of education service provider. CAPA is particularly concerned that the combination of inadequate regulation, lack of active supervision and the de-funding of alternative public provision will:

- (a) undermine the integrity of public universities;
- (b) enable the siphoning of public resources into commercial ventures;
- (c) make student intellectual property subject to appropriation into coursework;
- (d) destroy the cultures of reciprocity, collegiality and peer review which are central to the role of universities as creators of new ideas and independent contributors to the public sphere;
- (e) render meaningless the title of University;
- (f) devalue the currency of the awards of Australian universities; and
- (g) raise significant barriers to entering and completing postgraduate courses of reasonable quality for students from equity groups.

4.2.1.3 Accordingly, CAPA seeks the following as a minimum framework for governing the provision of postgraduate education where it may be affected by the transnationals and for-profit education market:

- (a) the establishment by the Commonwealth, States and Territories of a single entity with legal power to accredit providers, ensure quality and register all courses so accredited and ensured. This entity shall also provide a register of all courses that have either failed such accreditation or have not sought it;

- (b) comprehensive audit of all entities receiving government funds for the purpose of public education and research to ensure that this funding is only expended for these purposes;
- (c) Legal protection of the term University as it applies in Australia with sanctions to apply to those who misuse it. The definition of the term "University" will include a comprehensive checklist of the essential characteristics of a University. This checklist will contain an item, 'the active support of a postgraduate student organisation as now pertains in most public universities';
- (d) legal protection of the integrity of University level awards; and
- (e) a requirement on providers to reveal:
  - (i) the extent to which the course is actually provided by them or by third parties;
  - (ii) where the course content and all other elements of it are developed and delivered;
  - (iii) by whom the course content and all other elements of it are developed and delivered;
  - (iv) what percentage of the course was developed in Australian to meet Australian cultural, academic and professional expectations;
  - (v) the extent to which those involved in providing the course are engaged in research in the field of study being taught;
  - (vi) what the professional qualifications of those providing the course are;
  - (vii) the intellectual property rights of students and the conditions when such provisions are waived; and
  - (viii) the provider's record in the area of student complaints.

## 4.2.2 Education Export

4.2.2.1 CAPA believes that the overseas marketing of Australian higher education courses:

- (a) will bring about the destruction of the subsidised overseas student program and the abandonment of a critical area of Australia's foreign aid responsibilities. CAPA considers the shift from educational aid to educational trade to be reprehensible, as education is one of the most valuable forms of aid which Australia can offer to the less developed countries of the region;
- (b) will reduce access to education. Only those favoured by the home Government or the wealthiest people in less developed countries will have the opportunity for study in Australia, thus worsening the problems associated with the acutely unequal distribution of wealth in these countries;
- (c) will increase the already strong pressures for the re-introduction of tuition fees and the provision of full-fee courses for Australian students;
- (d) will distort resource allocation within and between existing tertiary institutions. Those institutions or departments unable to market services in any systematic way will be financially penalised;
- (e) will assist the development of private and semi-private tertiary institutions leading to the creation of a dual system of tertiary education;
- (f) will lead to the lowering of entry and examination standards for overseas students and diminish the status of Australian qualifications;

- (g) will lead to further deterioration of Australia's research standing as highly qualified graduates from overseas countries will be discouraged from undertaking research programs in Australia;
- (h) will lead inevitably to reduced levels of public financial support as institutions and/or departments are forced to rely on marketed services as a source of revenue; and
- (i) will promote expenditure on recruitment advertising, and entrench competition between national and international tertiary institutions, to the detriment of the tertiary sector as a whole.

## 4.3 Quality and Quality Assurance in Higher Education

### 4.3.1 General Principles

4.3.1.1 CAPA believes that:

- (a) the quality of teaching and supervision practice is of utmost importance to its members;
- (b) institutions have a responsibility to provide the highest possible standards of teaching; and
- (c) students must be involved in the development and assessment of programs.

4.3.1.2 CAPA believes that the relevant government agencies should monitor the adequacy and implementation of institutional Policy, and by whatever means possible, encourage institutions to adhere to them.

4.3.1.3 CAPA rejects the assumption that excellent researchers are automatically high quality teachers. CAPA believes that participation in course, teaching and supervision evaluation processes and staff development programs is vital to improving educational quality, and should be one of the criteria for the promotion of academic staff.

4.3.1.4 CAPA believes that enrolment intakes do not necessarily indicate quality in programs and that quality should be measured predominantly in terms of output rather than input. However, CAPA also believes that the use of output measures needs to be carefully considered in terms of their effect on the educational processes being monitored. For example, using PhD completions as an output measure of a quality research environment may result in strict and unrealistic time limits and a narrowing of the scope and intellectual ambition of research projects.

4.3.1.5 CAPA believes that quality assurance mechanisms are essential to developing and maintaining the highest possible of standards in postgraduate coursework education.

As such, CAPA endorses the following McInnis, James and Morris (1985) recommendations for quality assurance in postgraduate coursework education, and extends these to include all postgraduate coursework students:

- (a) that the coursework in masters programs ought to be conducted at a clearly advanced level in terms of the knowledge, skills and understandings required;
- (b) that the goals of coursework in masters programs should reflect the broader goals of university education, in particular, fostering

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intellectual values which transcend the boundaries of any particular branch of learning and any particular vocation, and achieving balance between the transmission of theoretical and practical skills, knowledge and where relevant professional values;

- (c) that the structure, process and delivery of education in these program should be based on recognition of the special nature of adult learning;
- (d) that quality assurance mechanisms ought to provide for formal consultation with students and the relevant professional bodies;
- (e) that graduate students have needs and aspirations which can usefully be distinguished from those of undergraduate and postgraduate research students; and
- (f) that the life and work experiences graduate students bring with them should be recognised and used to enrich learning environments.

4.3.1.6 CAPA supports the recommendation of the Senate Inquiry into "The Capacity of Public Universities to meet Australia's Higher Education needs" that a national University Ombudsman be appointed.

4.3.1.6.1 CAPA believes that the Ombudsman's powers to investigate certain matters should include those that are of the nature of allegations of "soft marking" etc and currently outside the ambit of AUQA.

4.3.1.7 CAPA believes that the Federal Government-initiated higher education quality review process is flawed and has severe limitations in that it fails to recognise areas of quality within universities, promotes a hierarchy of institutions, provides financial rewards for demonstrated quality whilst effectively imposing a financial penalty on those institutions most in need of additional resources, and is potentially detrimental to the educational processes that it seeks to audit.

4.3.1.8 CAPA also recognises that the present review system has had significant benefits for students negotiating for improved conditions and has provided the impetus for widespread institutional change.

4.3.1.9 CAPA believes that any federally initiated quality review process should not allocate funding on the basis of demonstrated quality, but rather on the basis of identified need.

4.3.1.10 That CAPA and its affiliate Postgraduate associations play a more active, central and effective role in the ongoing debate about the quality of higher education at Australian Universities.

4.3.1.11 CAPA believes that all tertiary institutions should have in place a quality assurance and improvement program, regardless of any Federal Government requirement, which includes:

- (a) student evaluation of teachers, courses and supervision;
- (b) staff development programs;
- (c) ongoing monitoring of the quality of institutional infrastructure including libraries, campus security, and research specific infrastructure; and
- (d) monitoring the effectiveness of institutional Policy and, where deficiencies exist, making appropriate changes.

### 4.3.2 Course Accreditation

- 4.3.2.1 CAPA has concerns over the quality and relevance of postgraduate coursework degrees in light of the decline of expenditure per student in higher education.
- 4.3.2.2 Because of these related problems CAPA believes that there should be national standards for the length, content and articulation of courses and that these should be consistently applied, the principle being that courses of the same name should be of equal worth.
- 4.3.2.3 To this end, CAPA supports the formation of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Association (TEQSA), the implementation of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), and the enforcement of the rules to ensure quality assurance in all qualifications across Australia.

## 4.4 Institutional Policy and Procedures

### 4.4.1 General Principles

- 4.4.1.1 CAPA believes that a high quality educational environment can only be provided for students when staff, students and management within the institution have their roles and responsibilities clearly defined. CAPA believes that this is best achieved through institutional Policy which is developed consultatively with the involvement and input of all stakeholders - including students and staff.
- 4.4.1.2 CAPA believes that institutional Policy should be clearly written and made widely available to all students, at the time of their enrolment, free of charge. It is the responsibility of the institution to inform students of their rights and institutional Policy.
- 4.4.1.3 CAPA believes that institutions should have Policy relating to the following issues:
- (a) staff/student relationships;
  - (b) intellectual property and moral rights;
  - (c) supervision;
  - (d) fee paying courses, particularly dealing with provision of access for identified equity groups, and refund Policy;
  - (e) conduct of research;
  - (f) distribution of scholarships and HECS exemptions;
  - (g) sexual harassment;
  - (h) discrimination;
  - (i) grievances, including process to appeal to an external body or persons outside the university. (Example: Ombudsman or University Visitor);
  - (j) unequivocal credit transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL);
  - (k) student evaluation of teaching and learning;
  - (l) consultation with students; and
  - (m) equity and access.
- 4.4.1.4 CAPA believes that it is the responsibility of institutions to adopt procedures which will ensure that academics neither mark nor supervise the work of students with whom they have either a familial or sexual relationship.

4.4.1.5 CAPA believes that it is the responsibility of the University to ensure that sufficient information is provided to postgraduates to ensure that any contractual agreement which is entered into by the student is done so with informed consent.

#### **4.4.2 Discrimination and Harassment Policies**

4.4.2.1 CAPA notes that the Universities have a legal responsibility to ensure staff and students are not subjected to behaviour, work practices, policies or processes that constitute unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification or victimisation.

4.4.2.2 CAPA believes that all Universities harassment, discrimination, vilification and victimisation Policy and procedures should incorporate the following:

- (a) Meticulous records must be maintained of all allegations and cases (informal and formal) of discrimination, harassment, vilification and victimisation.
- (b) Grievance procedures must accommodate the need for confidentiality and anonymity.
- (c) Fairness for both complainant and respondent to the complaint.
- (d) The procedure is carried out with an appropriate speed to ensure that opportunity for misconduct repetition and the build-up of bitterness is minimised, as are opportunities to breach the confidentiality to which complainant and respondent are entitled.
- (e) Any victimisation of a complainant to be automatically treated as "serious misconduct".
- (f) Particularly in cases of harassment, similar fact evidence should be admissible unless there is good reason to believe that it has been contaminated or arise from collusion.

4.4.2.3 CAPA believes that formal communications between the person(s) or office(s) responsible for the application and enforcement of the harassment, discrimination, vilification and victimisation Policy and procedures and student organisations should occur on a continuous basis.

#### **4.4.3 Grievance Resolution Procedures**

4.4.3.1 CAPA believes that all universities should maintain formal procedures to resolve postgraduate student grievances (e.g., problems with supervisors, sexual harassment). While the amicable and unofficial resolution of disputes is applauded, such solutions are often unfeasible due to the imbalance of power involved in student /staff relationships. Therefore, CAPA believes that all universities must have stated appeal procedures, which are relevant to coursework and research postgraduates and to both academic and non-academic appeals. They must be able to be invoked during candidature and also to dispute examination results after candidature has ceased.

4.4.3.2 CAPA believes that the model grievance procedures developed during 1995 should form the basis for all institutional grievance procedures, and that it should provide a basis for constituents to gain improvements to institutional grievance procedures. In establishing institutional grievance procedures CAPA believes that the following issues should be addressed:

- (a) all relevant bodies including student and staff associations should be consulted during the development of procedures and in regular reviews of their operations;

- (b) both staff and students should be covered by grievance procedures;
- (c) both students and staff are well informed of the grievance procedures;
- (d) staff involved in postgraduate education should be conversant with their institutions' grievance procedures;
- (e) adequate and appropriate training on counselling, mediation and conflict resolution are provided for all grievance officers;
- (f) a code of practice for the complaints officers should be developed;
- (g) complainants are informed of all avenues of support and advice such as postgraduate associations, counselling services, student rights officers etc.;
- (h) students should be eligible to apply for positions as grievance officers;
- (i) the grievance should remain always in the hands of the complainant who should be free to try other avenues of support;
- (j) trends of grievances should be monitored, particularly their nature, their frequency and their resolution and made generally available; and
- (k) the procedures for grievances need to be well publicised throughout the institution and widely available.

4.4.3.3 CAPA believes that the responsibilities of Grievance Officers should include:

- (a) notifying and discussing with the complainant the steps to be taken by the grievance officers to resolve the grievance; and
- (b) monitoring the complainant's situation after a grievance is resolved, and ensuring that the grievance has indeed been resolved.

4.4.3.4 CAPA endorses the grievance procedures in the paper "CAPA Model Grievance Procedures".

## **4.5 Postgraduate Representation**

### **4.5.1 General Principles**

4.5.1.1 CAPA supports the right of postgraduate students to organise in democratic and representative unions and associations, recognising the specific interests of postgraduate students. To this end CAPA supports the following as fundamental to the principles of postgraduate student unionism and representation at the campus, regional and national level:

- (a) Postgraduate student associations, areas, departments and committees must be participatory, democratically constituted, and must abide by democratic decisions made by their rank and file members at all times.
- (b) Postgraduate student associations, areas, departments and committees must be controlled by their membership and be free from unwarranted interference from institutional administrations, State or Federal Governments, or other external organisations.
- (c) Recognising that all that benefits from student organisation should contribute to the maintenance and support of those organisations, membership should therefore be automatic upon the payment of the membership fee at enrolment.
- (d) Full expression of postgraduate student organisation recognises the right of postgraduate students to establish Policy and speak, to publish through campus postgraduate associations and CAPA, and to assemble and protest on all matters of concern to postgraduate

students. Institutions should therefore recognise the duly constituted decisions of postgraduate student associations, areas, departments and committees.

- (e) CAPA believes that postgraduate students should have full rights of membership on the governing bodies and their subcommittees of all tertiary institutions. Representatives should be elected by and from postgraduate students, or by the appropriate decision-making forum of the campus postgraduate student organisation.
- (f) To allow for effective organisation, all postgraduate awards, scholarships or fellowships should have a built in provision for an extension for a maximum period of one year where the holder of that award, scholarship or fellowship is elected to an executive position in their campus postgraduate student organisation or CAPA.
- (g) To allow for effective organisation, postgraduate student associations, areas, departments and committees should have staff support, where such staff are funded from the membership fee, and a separate office on campus that is accessible to postgraduate students.

4.5.1.2 Notwithstanding the above, CAPA believes postgraduate student associations, areas, departments and committees, should make provision for postgraduate students to express genuine conscientious objection to membership of the organisation. This objection should not be linked to any fee reduction or exemption.

## **4.5.2 Minimum Standards and Resources for Postgraduate Representation**

4.5.2.1. CAPA believes that postgraduate associations make an invaluable contribution to the social, intellectual, cultural and political life of universities. Part of their role is to contribute to the management of universities by participating on decision-making bodies. Postgraduate representation on university committees ensures that university managements are accountable, and responsive to and informed about postgraduate student issues.

4.5.2.2 CAPA believes that postgraduate students should be represented on decision-making bodies at the departmental, faculty and university levels. In particular, CAPA believes that postgraduate students should have representation on university committees governing budgetary matters.

4.5.2.3 CAPA recognises the important role student representatives play in university governance, particularly at the highest level of University Councils.

4.5.2.4. CAPA believes that the minimum standard for postgraduate student representation in universities is that the President of the postgraduate organisation or nominated representative sit with voting rights on the highest decision making body and on all committees which affect postgraduate students including policy, finance, scholarship and library committees.

- 4.5.2.5. CAPA asserts the importance of stakeholder representation on the academic boards (or equivalents) of transnational education providers, and recognises the importance of forming links with other student representative bodies interested in transnational education.
- 4.5.2.6 CAPA recognises that Postgraduate Student Associations require a raft of minimum resources in order to function efficiently at the institutional level and as active partners in the national postgraduate representative arena.
- 4.5.2.7 CAPA believes that, as a minimum, Postgraduate Associations should be able to provide:
- (a) Staff - Policy research, advocacy case-work and administrative support;
  - (b) Representatives – at least part-time stipended President, and preferably other office bearers;
  - (c) Activities –
    - a. Publication (labour and costs);
    - b. projects (surveys, special policy, research, etc.);
    - c. conference attendance (eg CAPA ACM, QC, Pathways, and NOWSA);
    - d. events for networking (eg bbqs, trivia nights);
    - e. events for information (eg seminars, CAPA roadshows); and,
    - f. services (depending on the role and nature of the organisation).
  - (d) Suitable premises with mobility accessibility, preferably centrally located

## 4.6 Funding

- 4.6.1 CAPA believes that each postgraduate association should have guaranteed and stable funding. This funding which can be in the form of:
- (a) a direct transfer from the University of the services and amenities fee (or equivalent) paid by the postgraduate student body; or
  - (b) a grant from the total student body or University Union determined by a formula which should be based on a proportion of the postgraduate contribution to the amenities and services fee or equivalent. The annual grant and formula should be included in the constitution of the representative student body or University Union to guarantee a stable and reliable source of funding for the postgraduate association. The proportion should be determined by negotiation with the appropriate funding body depending on the needs and circumstances of the association but should not be less than 50% of the total amenities and services fees paid by postgraduates.
- 4.6.2 CAPA believes that ideally, all of the services and amenities fees (or equivalent) paid by postgraduate students should be granted to the postgraduate student association or a sum of money equal to but not less than this amount which may be derived from some other formula. The PGSA may then negotiate with other student bodies, University Unions and other services to determine what monies will be paid by the PGSA for those services used by postgraduate students

which are not provided by the PGSA. This would provide the association with autonomy and independence from the undergraduate student body.

- 4.6.3 CAPA supports the principle of security of funding of postgraduate groups, but does not support any intervention on the part of the University administrators, which would be contrary to the principle of student control of student organisations.

## 4.7 So Called Voluntary Student Unionism

- 4.7.1 CAPA fundamentally opposes the 2005 Amendment to the Higher Education Act banning compulsory membership of student unions.
- 4.7.2 CAPA believes that student organisations are fundamentally democratic and accountable organisations, that all students benefit from the representation and services provided by student organisations, and that student organisations are in effect the "Government" for the student community. CAPA believes that because of the benefit derived by all students from their associations, all students should contribute to the costs of running their associations.
- 4.7.3 CAPA opposes limitations on the ability of students to control their own services, to organise and conduct campaigns on issues of concern to students and to publicly express opinions, which the Government of the day may disagree with.
- 4.7.4 CAPA opposes compulsory non-membership of student unions (so-called Voluntary Student Unionism) because:
- (a) such legislation is a gross intrusion on the autonomy and integrity of student organisations;
  - (b) such legislation threatens the provision of social, cultural and recreational opportunities and amenities for students;
  - (c) such legislation threatens the provision of essential student services on university campuses; and
  - (d) such legislation is aimed at undermining the collective political voice of students as is clearly demonstrated in Victoria, where certain activities of a supposedly political nature are effectively prohibited.
- 4.7.5 CAPA believes that compulsory non-membership has been introduced not out of concern for students, but because conservative politicians at both the State and Federal level often disagree with student organisations, and wish to undermine their ability to contribute to public debate on higher education and other issues relevant to students.
- 4.7.6 CAPA recognises that legislative changes have been proposed in an attempt to lessen the impact of the 2005 amendment, however only the full repeal of the legislation will allow student organisations to satisfactorily meet their members needs.
- 4.7.7 CAPA supports the concept of collective and universal membership of student representative organisations because it is indispensable for the protection and promotion of all students' rights, and, in particular, vulnerable student groups.
- 4.7.7.1 CAPA feels strongly that universal membership of student organisations is a fundamental, necessary and socially desirable element of participation in university education.

- 4.7.7.2 CAPA believes that the representation and services provided by student organisations such as academic and welfare advocacy, participation in and contribution to University governance, formulation of institutional, State and Federal higher education policy *inter alia* represents a significant contribution to:
- (a) the maintenance of procedural fairness;
  - (b) timely advice and assistance to students;
  - (c) their role as watchdog over institutional and governmental policy and legislation;
  - (d) collegiality; and
  - (e) the maintenance and improvements to the publicly funded University system.
- 4.7.7.3 CAPA believes it vital that, within the publicly funded University system, student organisations provide a significant benefit to, and investment in, current and future students and to the continuance of the public funded University system itself.
- 4.7.7.4 CAPA believes that student organisations are best placed to provide this significant investment within a framework of “student control of student affairs”.
- 4.7.7.5 CAPA believes the public benefits inherent in universal membership outweighs any notional public detriments.
- 4.7.7.6 CAPA believes it is not desirable for any University to subsume or elect to charge and collect a fee itself, thereby avoiding continuance of the notified conduct, in order to provide those services, representation and advocacy, that are normally provided by student organisations.

## **4.8 Independent Advice for Government**

- 4.8.1 CAPA believes it is essential that a body or bodies exist to give the Government independent advice on all higher education issues.
- 4.8.2 Accordingly, CAPA condemns the winding up of the Higher Education Council and its parent body, the National Board of Education, Employment and Training.

## **4.9 Postgraduate Employment**

### **4.9.1 General Principles**

- 4.9.1.1 CAPA recognises the value of part-time and/or casual work in higher education for postgraduates. Benefits include experience gained in higher education employment, particularly for those involved in teaching, additional income for the postgraduate, and a greater understanding of the link between research and teaching.
- 4.9.1.2 However, CAPA also recognises that excessive use of casual and short-term part-time labour in higher education is problematic. Higher education employers may use these modes of employment to reduce costs to the detriment of quality, to provide a docile and easily exploited labour force, constantly under the threat of arbitrary termination without redress, and in ways that unlawfully discriminate against women.

- 4.9.1.3 CAPA also recognises the longer term implications of excessive use of casual and short-term employment in undermining conditions for employees currently in employment in higher education, and for postgraduates who in future may seek employment in higher education.
- 4.9.1.4 CAPA believes that part-time teaching is a valuable component of postgraduates' skill development and a major stage in their career paths. It is perceived by many postgraduates, especially in the Humanities, as a significant opportunity for professional and personal development. Such positions should therefore be allocated in fair and open competition, based on merit and in accordance with the University's EEO guidelines. As many postgraduates as possible should be given the opportunity of at least some teaching experience during the course of their candidature.
- 4.9.1.5 CAPA believes that such measures can also benefit undergraduates, who will as a consequence be exposed to a variety of teaching by the most qualified postgraduates in their department. As such, CAPA is in favour of the following guidelines:
- (a) that all seasonal teaching vacancies be advertised internally, with advertisements clearly setting out selection criteria;
  - (b) that duty statements and statements of conditions and wages be developed for each position, and made available to applicants;
  - (c) that departments ensure that as far as is possible all internal postgraduates are made aware of teaching vacancies and are encouraged to apply;
  - (d) that all applicants short-listed be interviewed by a panel properly constituted according to the University's EEO guidelines; and
  - (e) that an internal appeals process be open to all unsuccessful applicants.
- 4.9.1.6 CAPA believes that part-time teaching should only be made available to postgraduates as a fractional appointment. Fractional appointment applies to anyone working less than full-time but on a regular basis (for example a term or semester). Fractional appointments would ensure postgraduate access to such benefits as research funds, sick leave, holiday pay and long service leave in proportion to the fraction of their appointment.
- 4.9.1.7 CAPA believes that postgraduate students should be free to undertake any employment provided that they comply with the conditions of any scholarships they hold at that time. A postgraduate's acceptance or non-acceptance of such work should not prejudice her or his candidature, standing in the department, or the continuation of his or her scholarship.
- 4.9.1.8 CAPA opposes any linking of part-time teaching or other work within the higher education sector with postgraduate study where the work is carried out in an unpaid capacity. This practice takes advantage of postgraduates, and entrenches the view that postgraduates are a source of cheap and readily exploited labour in higher education.
- 4.9.1.9 CAPA believes that part-time teaching should be accepted as a valid reason for extension of candidature.
- 4.9.1.10 CAPA opposes any compulsion placed on postgraduates to perform tutorial or demonstration work.

- 4.9.1.11 CAPA endorses the publication "A Postgraduate's Guide to University Employment", jointly produced with the NTEU.
- 4.9.1.12 CAPA endorses the need of postgraduate students to undertake paid employment without restriction as long as it does not limit their ability to complete their studies.
- 4.9.1.13 CAPA believes that postgraduate students benefit financially and intellectually from being able to undertake academic work alongside their study and believes that universities should prioritise the paid employment of postgraduate students in such positions.
- 4.9.1.14 CAPA believes that students employed on campus should have the benefit of collectively negotiated agreements and recommends that students should join the appropriate trade union.
- 4.9.1.15 CAPA believes that students employed on campus have a right to nationally consistent and advantageous employment conditions for all comparable work.

## **4.9.2 Representation of Postgraduates' Industrial Interests**

- 4.9.2.1 CAPA recognises that it is not able to represent the industrial interests of postgraduate students, and that the National Tertiary Education Industry Union (NTEU) or other relevant trade unions are the most appropriate bodies to represent the interests of postgraduate students in matters related to their employment.
- 4.9.2.2 CAPA believes that postgraduate students employed in the higher education sector should ensure that their rights as employees are effectively protected by joining the relevant industry union.
- 4.9.2.3 Representing the industrial interests of postgraduate students is often difficult, given the nature of the labour force, and CAPA thus acknowledges the substantial efforts made to represent these interests by NTEU in its industrial claims.

## **4.9.3 Work Conditions**

- 4.9.3.1 CAPA constituents in campaigning to protect the rights of casually employed postgraduate students should have regard to the following principles. Any campaign should:
- (a) be conducted in conjunction with local NTEU Branches where possible, or NTEU divisions;
  - (b) include monitoring of the incidence of casual employment amongst postgraduates, especially in areas of reduced staff numbers;
  - (c) identify where casually employed postgraduates are located and disseminate regular updates on casual employment issues;
  - (d) include lobbying of relevant NTEU branches going into enterprise bargaining to pursue improved conditions for casual employment;
  - (e) establish networks of casually employed postgraduates, to provide information, support and resources;
  - (f) organise departmental meetings of casually employed postgraduates to inform them of their industrial and professional rights and of the impact of the NTEU's non-continuing employment award case;

- (g) develop a code of employment conduct for casuals and lobby university administrations to implement the code; and
- (h) develop general and specific information packages to distribute to casuals through all relevant induction programs run by postgraduate associations, faculties and the NTEU, and nominate at least one member of executive committees of associations to be responsible for casual employment issues.

4.9.3.2 CAPA believes that the terms and conditions set out in the NTEU's 1998 casual and fixed term claim are just and appropriate, and that postgraduates employed in the tertiary education sector in casual or fixed term appointments should be employed under those terms and conditions.

4.9.3.3 CAPA believes that the NTEU policy E9(a) Safety in the Laboratories which states that the NTEU liaise with appropriate student organisations at both national and local level, and work correctively with them in the compilation and distribution of information on laboratory safety.

#### **4.9.4 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in higher education.**

4.9.4.1 CAPA supports the implementation of affirmative action programs to enhance employment opportunities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands Peoples in all sectors of the education system. Universities should implement Policy and strategies to prioritise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate students for research, consultancies and teaching which focuses on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. Universities should recognise their responsibility in facilitating growth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support units in recognising affirmative action principles in enhancing employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. A completion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students requires that Tertiary institutions create opportunities to support growth and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander human resources across the University.

4.9.4.2 CAPA feels it is vital that universities accept Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as honorary staff members with paid status with other postgraduate supervisors to better meet the supervisors' needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduate students. Furthermore, CAPA believes that Universities, the AV-CC, NTEU and DDoGS need to introduce academic and employment directed cadetship schemes that recognise the diverse study areas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and in consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support units as a reconciliation initiative for all courses offered in universities.

4.9.4.3 CAPA recognises the disparity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in regard to post-secondary qualifications. CAPA therefore will urge the Federal Government to establish a postgraduate cadetship scheme for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people intending to pursue an academic career.

## 5 Socio Political Policy

### 5.1 Environment

- 5.1.1 CAPA supports concern and awareness of environmental, social and political issues. CAPA believes that all stakeholders in postgraduate education have a responsibility in moving society to true environmental sustainability and socio political equality.
- 5.1.2 Despite all current efforts the global environment is still rapidly deteriorating. The social and ecological sustainability of the world is in jeopardy, and we are currently leaving our children a devastated planet. CAPA recognises that Universities have a prime responsibility through their leadership, operations, teaching, consultancies & research in moving Australian society to true social & environmental sustainability for the future.
- 5.1.3 CAPA recognises the need to reflect the reality that humanity is affecting the environment in ways which are historically unprecedented and which are potentially devastating for both natural ecosystems and ourselves. Since colleges and universities are an integral part of the global economy and since they prepare most of the professionals who develop, manage and teach in society's public, private and non-governmental institutions, they are uniquely positioned to influence the direction we choose to take as a society. CAPA, as a major contributor to the values, health and well being of society, higher education has a fundamental responsibility to encourage teaching, training and research for sustainability. CAPA believes that the success of higher education in the twenty-first century will be judged by our ability to put forward a bold agenda that makes sustainability and the environment a cornerstone of academic practice.
- 5.1.4 "Sustainability" implies that the critical activities of a higher education institution are (at a minimum) ecologically sound, socially just and economically viable, and that they will continue to be so for future generations. A truly sustainable college or university would emphasize these concepts in its curriculum and research, preparing students to contribute as working citizens to an environmentally sound and socially just society. The institution would function as a sustainable community, embodying responsible consumption of food and energy, treating its diverse members with respect, and supporting these values in the surrounding community.
- 5.1.5 CAPA endorses:
- (a) the concept of the Triple Bottom Line Accounting;
  - (b) the Earth Charter; and,
  - (c) Talloires Declaration.
- 5.1.6 CAPA recognises the need to include education for social and ecological sustainability and the future as a necessary part of all graduates learning. Both individuals and organisations within universities are at the forefront of identifying and solving the many global social and environmental problems. However, these efforts towards sustainability are not taught or even recognised in other courses nor do they show up in the overall operation of universities as major consumers of the earth's finite resources. The education of postgraduates is essential to changing this trend and should be core components of all courses.

- 5.1.7 CAPA supports the active promotion of tolerance, acceptance and respect for all cultures. CAPA acknowledges fully that racism exists, and is present at all levels in higher education and the postgraduate community. CAPA encourages active dialogue and education, as it believes this is the best way to work towards an environment which respects and supports all culture and opposes racist ideals.
- 5.1.8 Despite all current efforts the global environment is still rapidly deteriorating. The social and ecological sustainability of the world is in jeopardy, and we are currently leaving our children a devastated planet.
- 5.1.9 Both individuals and organisations within universities are at the forefront of identifying and solving the many global social and environmental problems. However, these efforts towards sustainability are not taught or even recognised in other courses nor do they show up in the overall operation of universities as major consumers of the earth's finite resources. The education of postgraduates is essential to changing this trend and should be core components of all courses.
- 5.1.10 CAPA recognises the need to include education for social and ecological sustainability and the future as a necessary part of all graduates learning.

## **5.2 Asia Pacific Education**

- 5.2.1 CAPA believes that education is a basic right, and that as such it is necessary to support this concept through practical endeavours. Noting the difficulties that other postgraduates encounter in the Asia Pacific region in accessing learning tools and support networks, CAPA would like to encourage those programs, initiatives and networks that will assist those postgraduates, their organizations and institutions, faced with considerable technical, financial and structural obstacles in their learning pursuits

## **5.3 Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

- 5.3.1 CAPA condemns the decision of the Australian Government to expel refugees, asylum seekers, and their families from Australia.
- 5.3.2 CAPA supports all those seeking higher education in Australia, especially postgraduate students. CAPA supports all those wishing to access higher education in Australia from the refugee and asylum seeker community and their families and will do so on an ongoing basis.

## **5.4 Political Affiliations**

- 5.4.1 CAPA does not endorse nor affiliate with any political party, and must not fund any political party.
- 5.4.2 CAPA must not receive funding from any political party.