

This dissertation is presented as fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 2005.
I declare that this dissertation is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not been submitted previously for a degree at any tertiary institution.

Signed:

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ABSTRACT

In 1985 the Australian Government announced a momentous policy initiative allowing Australian universities to enrol full-fee paying international students for the first time. This case study is an analysis of the policy development that ensued at Murdoch University between 1985 and 1991 as it responded to this opportunity to alleviate problems, with finance and low student numbers, that were threatening its very existence as an independent university. In particular, it examines the factors that had placed Murdoch in such a parlous situation, and the reasons why it was able to respond quickly and effectively so as to implement a highly successful and comprehensive program for the recruitment, enrolment and support of full-fee paying international students.

The case study format allowed for the use of a wide range of data sources. Sources of documentary evidence included: formal written works about the events and concepts under investigation, newspapers and other media items, letters, memoranda, agendas and minutes of meetings, and other internal Murdoch University documents. In addition, archival materials such as annual reports, budgets and financial records were consulted. Verification and extension of the documentary and archival evidence was gained from interviews with past and present staff and students of Murdoch University who had been involved with the program.

The study found that organisational changes initiated by successive Vice-Chancellors in the 1980s had replaced a slow and unresponsive, collegial style of decision-making, based on very wide consultation, with a more centralised, bureaucratic and market-
oriented system. New, streamlined procedures, and the devolution of policy-
development to small, semi-autonomous committees, enabled the University to
rapidly develop policies and procedures for the inauguration of a program for full-fee
paying international students in 1987. The continued success of the program, both in
terms of enrolment numbers and financial returns, was found to be based on the
creation and development of an almost independent, and entrepreneurial, International
Office for the organisation of most aspects of the program, including the marketing
and recruitment process.
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INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Background To The Study.

In a press release in July 1985, the Commonwealth Minister for Education, Senator Susan Ryan, announced that the Government would be enacting legislation that would allow Australian universities to enrol international students on the basis of full cost-recovery for their courses. This statement and the subsequent legislation that was enacted were to have significant implications for most of Australia’s universities. As will be discussed later, many institutions at the time were experiencing problems of shortfalls in finance or of student numbers (or both) and saw this initiative as an opportunity to alleviate these problems. This study is concerned particularly with the evolving policy responses of Murdoch University to this Commonwealth triggered shift, which was part of a complex set of globalising and local forces affecting tertiary education in Australia.

Globalising Forces

The last two decades of the Twentieth Century was a period of great change for Australian Universities. They were forced to adapt their policies and practices in response to significant policy changes on the part of Commonwealth and State Governments. These bodies, in their turn, had been affected by the set of forces commonly referred to as “globalisation”. There are many, often quite different, definitions of the concept of globalisation (Pierre 2000, Dale 1999, Marginson 1999). Some sources see globalisation as a purely economic phenomenon characterised by the emergence of supranational companies whose transactions are not fettered by national boundaries or economic structures (Wolf 2000, Perraton 2000). Others perceive it as more of a cultural and political force by which Western governments
and companies, in particular, seek to impose a cultural homogeneity to further their ideological and financial interests (Halimi 200, Sklair 2000, Cerny 1996). There is also support for the position that globalising forces are both economic and political/cultural in nature and are by no means uniform in their spread or effects throughout the world (Lechner 2000, Naygar 1997, Barber 2000, Tomlinson 2000). In spite of this divergence, there is some general agreement that the apparently simultaneous emergence of globalising forces in so many countries was due in great part to massive technological developments, especially in transportation and communication (Wolf 2000, Cerny 1996, Humphreys and Simpson 1996, Green 1999). The ability to instantaneously exchange information, transact business between companies thousands of kilometres apart, or broadcast ones ideology to an international audience, has irrevocably changed our world. Companies are emerging that pay no attention to traditional national boundaries, shifting capital, and sometimes the labour force, to those places in which the greatest financial returns can be obtained. The traditional role of governments is changing as they adapt to the situation in which they are less able to control the financial and social forces that transcend national boundaries (McNeely 2000, Ohmae 2000, Craypo and Wilkinson 2000). This is not to say, however, that nations have lost control of their own destinies. The majority of the sources deny the extremist view of globalisation as a process that will inevitability lead to the total breakdown of the ‘nation state’. They believe that the identity of nations has not been much reduced; rather, the spread of globalising forces has been uneven, and national governments have adapted to them in a variety of ways, always seeking to maintain national identity and control (Alder 1997, Korsgaard 1997, Pierre 2000, Mittleman 1997).
There is some agreement on the reactions to the manifestation of globalising forces in Western countries such as the USA, the UK and Australia. In that type of country in particular, the globalisation phenomenon has been accompanied by a transformation of economic policy to a form variously labelled as ‘neo-liberal’, ‘New Right’, ‘Reaganomics’ etc. (Dudley 1998, Pierre 2000, Waters 1999). While the particular characteristics of these economic theories differ from nation to nation, we can discern in all cases a move towards ‘smaller government’. That is, the role of governments is, theoretically, reduced to an enabling functionality with the operation of many of the nation’s institutions transferred into the hands of non-government entities. Pierre (2000) described the philosophical change as one in which government is seen: “Not as a solution but a chief source of several problems in society, but most distinctly poor economic performance”. Pierre said that the solution to those problems was seen to be in:

Firm monetaristic economic policy, coupled with deregulation, privatisation, drastic reduction in the civil service, the introduction of ‘managerialism’ in the civil service, and a profound institutional restructuring of the state creating semi-autonomous agencies to replace governmental centres of command and central function.

The Australian Scene

The effects of globalising forces were seen to be evolving in most Western nations, including Australia (Mittleman 1997, Cox 1997, Panitch 1997, Henry et al 2001). In reference to Australia in particular, Dudley (1999) said that governments had moved to: “Reduce public spending, deregulate capital and labour markets, minimise welfare provision and either eliminate or privatise as much as possible of the welfare state”. Henry et al (1999) listed the results as: “A contraction of state funding for activities once thought of as ‘public’, a greater reliance on various forms of ‘user pays’ for services once funded through (progressive) tax systems, and the corporatization or
privatization of formerly public utilities”. Of particular interest for this study is the significant level of adoption of these kinds of policy stances by the Hawke Labor Government that came to power in 1983. This style of national economic management was to have far-reaching implications for Australian tertiary education.

The movement of the Hawke government towards the economic rationalist style of management and the effect of this on higher education are well documented. (See, for example, Bartlett et al 1989, Birch and Smart 1987, Davis 2000, Lingard 1990, Marginson 1988, Smart and Ang 1993, Smart and Dudley 1990, Stone 1988.) Both before and after Ryan’s announcement in 1985, senior ministers, from the Prime Minister down, had made it clear that they expected education to play its part in solving Australia’s balance-of-payments problems by boosting the export of education services (Hawke 1983, Hawke 1984, Button 1986, Dawkins 1987, Dawkins, 1988). Finance Minister Peter Walsh clearly stated his personal position that education must become more responsible for its own costs when he moved in Cabinet to reintroduce tuition fees for all students, both international and Australian. Though this proposition was blocked by Ryan “with the support of the rabble of the Caucus Education Committee” (Walsh 1995), it was indicative of the pervading philosophy that would ultimately led to the introduction of full-fee places for international students at Australian universities.

Tuition Fees

From an historical perspective, while Ryan’s announcement of the government’s new policy direction for international students broke very new ground for Australian
universities, neither the collection of tuition fees nor the enrolment of international students was especially new to the system.

Until 1974, universities in Australia had been funded by a combination of grants from the federal and state governments, fees from students (both local and international), investments, endowments and donations. In 1939 student fees constituted about fifteen percent and by 1971 this had fallen to about ten percent (Karmel 1998). In an historic move, on 1st January 1974, the socialist Whitlam Commonwealth Government relieved the States of their funding responsibility, taking on the total government and student monetary input on the condition that tuition fees be abolished at all universities. At the time of Ryan’s announcement, the tradition of “free” university education had endured for just a little more than ten years. It was, however, a significant period of time because several universities, including Murdoch University, were founded within the span. Such institutions had, therefore no history at all of a direct financial contribution to their costs from student tuition fees.

International Students
The first international students are recorded in Australian universities in 1904 (Fraser 1984). Their numbers had risen to 10 656 in 1983 when the Hawke government took office (Goldring 1984). Until the advent of the Colombo Plan in 1950, these students, or their home governments or other sponsors, would all have paid the same fees as Australian students, representing ten to fifteen percent of their proportion of the operating cost of the universities. After 1950, however, a gradually increasing proportion of international students would have been relieved of their fees under Australian government foreign aid programs until in 1974 they, like all other students,
ceased to pay tuition fees. As will be discussed more fully below, an Overseas Student Charge was introduced in 1979 (Commonwealth of Australia 1979). This charge, and the Visa Charge that was to replace it, still represented only a small percentage of the cost of their education, though the charges had been slowly increasing with further rises foreshadowed. Thus, neither the payment of tuition fees nor the enrolment of international students was entirely new to Australian universities. The novel factor in the legislation foreshadowed by Ryan in 1985, was the combination of the two in a policy initiative by which she proposed to create a new, distinct group of international students who would pay one hundred percent of the cost of their tuition.

Ryan’s announcement should have come as little surprise to Canberra watchers. The Fraser government had set up two inquiries to investigate the state of provision of education services to international students and both of these had presented their reports to the Hawke government in 1984 (Commonwealth of Australia 1984a, Commonwealth of Australia 1984b). Under its reformist Minister John Dawkins, the Australian Department of Trade had also set up a mission to South-East Asia and Hong Kong in 1985 to examine the prospects for the export of education services to those areas and it had submitted a favourable report to the government early in that year. The Goldring Report expressed a preference for the maintenance of services to all foreign students under the then current arrangements, that is, with the largest proportion of the cost borne as part of Australia’s foreign aid budget, plus a small “visa charge” to the students (Commonwealth of Australia 1984b). The other reports, however, suggested that there was a significant opportunity for Australia to enter the global market for the export of education services at the university level. The Jackson
Report’s cost-recovery stance matched more closely the economic viewpoint being expressed by senior members of the Hawke government.

The Research Methodology
This study examines the process by which the concept of the enrolment of full-fee international students came to be accepted and, subsequently, implemented at Murdoch University in the period 1985 - 1991. This period was chosen because the primary interest of the study was in the initial creation and early evolution of the program. By 1991, the basic policy framework of the program was in place and being implemented by Murdoch’s International Office.

In particular, the study concerns itself with these questions:

- Why did the University find itself in such an adverse financial and developmental position that the implementation of a full-fee paying international student program became a priority for its decision-makers?
- Why, in spite of some strong initial resistance, did the full-fee initiative so readily make the transformation from an opportunity to a set of Murdoch policies and practices?
- How were the crucial decisions that put the new policies and practices into place made?
- How were those policies and practices implemented in the Murdoch context?

The research methodology selected to inform this study is that of a case study. This choice was made in response to an awareness that the questions and conditions that existed in relation to this study matched the criteria described in the literature as being
suitable for a case study methodology. Yin (1994) states that studies concerned with the questions “How?” and “Why?” are best pursued by means of a case study. Further, the focus of the study is a contemporary phenomenon in which the unfolding of the events is completely beyond the control of the researcher, which again suits it to the case study methodology (Yin 1994, Burns 1997).

Burns (1997) and Stake (1998) refer to the need for the existence of a “bounded system” if one is to use case study as a research methodology. In this case the study is bounded by the institution that is Murdoch University, processes related to the institution’s reaction to a particular federal government policy change and a particular time frame. Similarly, Merriam (1998) depicts case studies as being “particularistic” in that they focus on a particular situation, event, program or phenomenon and Burns (1997) offers examples of possible units for case study:

- Change in a particular establishment (such as Murdoch University)
- The implementation of a particular program (the enrolment of full-fee international students) or
- Decision-making processes at an institution.

Another important feature of the exploration of questions by means of a case study is that this investigation takes place without the existence of pre-determined hypotheses. Merriam describes case studies as being “inductive” in that: “Generalisations, concepts or hypotheses emerge from the examination of the data” (Merriam 1988). Discovery of the relationships, concepts and understandings, rather than the verification of pre-determined hypotheses, characterise qualitative case studies.” In a similar vein, Yin describes this type of analysis as “explanation building” (Yin 1994).
Support for the selection of the case study methodology is also found in Burn’s assertion that the case study is suited to situations in which the researcher’s interest is in process, rather than outcome, and discovery, rather than confirmation (Burns 1988). Such an approach sits well with the concept of a case study, as expressed by Merriam, that they are “heuristic” in that the reader gains insights into how things got to be the way that they are through exploration of the problem, its background, what happened and why. In this particular case, the study explores the events and processes at Murdoch University that led to the changes of policy and practice necessary to implement a program for the enrolment of full-fee international students, and the way in which that program evolved in its first six years of operation.

The reader’s understanding of a study should be further enhanced by another characteristic of case study in that it is “descriptive”, at its best giving rise to what Merriam describes as, “A rich ‘thick’ description of the phenomenon under study”. In such a description, according to Merriam, the reader is presented with a complete, literal picture of the situation that:

- illustrates its complexity
- covers several years and describes how the preceding decades led to the situation
- shows the influence of personalities
- shows the influence of the passage of time and/or changes of administration
- spells out differences of opinion on the issue. (Merriam 1988)
While extolling the case study as the most suitable methodology for research such as this study of Murdoch University, the literature also warns of dangers inherent in the use of the methodology. Perhaps the most obvious, yet most easily adopted, is the ‘snare’ of researcher bias and selective collection and/or representation of the evidence. Awareness of this possibility should be enough in itself to force the researcher to diligently test statements made in the report and to periodically re-examine the evidence presented in an attempt to ensure that all aspects have been recognised in the discussion (Burns 1997). These safeguards may be strengthened by the engagement of other persons in critical reading of the work in progress.

Criticism of the case study methodology is also made on the basis of a perceived lack of reliability and validity in the presentation of the data. A significant solution to these potential sources of error is that of “triangulation” in the assessment of the data available to the researcher (Smith 1975, Shipman 1988, Yin 1994, Burns 1997). Triangulation is described as the process in which a particular piece of evidence is checked from as many different sources as possible. A newspaper report of the outcomes of a meeting, for example, could be checked against the formal minutes and, if possible, by interviews with some of the meeting’s participants. This practice has been adopted wherever possible in this current study. In cases in which there is dependence on a single data source, this should be clear from the text.

Whether the findings of a case study should be generalisable to similar situations is also problematic to the researcher. Stake asserts that:

*In the case study, there may or may not be an ultimate interest in the generalisable. For the time being, the search is for understanding of the particular case, in its idiosyncrasy, in its complexity.* (Stake 1988)
And Schofield found that:

_A consensus seems to be emerging that for qualitative researches generalizability is best thought of as a matter of the “fits” between the situation studied and others to which one might be interested in applying the concepts and conclusions of that study. This conceptualisation makes thick descriptions crucial, since without them one does not have the information necessary for an informed judgement about the issue of fit._ (Schofield 1990)

This is the position adopted in this study, with no attempt being made to transfer hypotheses that arise from the study of processes at Murdoch University to situations at other institutions. The purpose of the study is to gain insights into the unique circumstances at that one university. Following the practice advocated by Stake (1988) (above) and Burns (1997) that, “Generalisation should be a reader-made responsibility in which the reader decides the extent to which the researcher’s case is similar to and likely to be instructive to theirs”, the researcher leaves any generalisations of the Murdoch case study to other situations in the hands of readers of the report.

Data Collection.

Yin (1994) asserts that a major strength of case study data collection is the opportunity for the researcher to use many different sources of evidence. The case study does not depend on just measuring and recording behaviour, as in an experimental study, or events that have no contemporary sources such as interviews, as in a history. In this particular study, three main data sources have been used: documentation, archival records and interviews, with some minor use of direct observations on the Murdoch campus by the researcher.

There are many forms of documentary evidence. In this study, the category includes:

- letters and memoranda
- agendas of meetings and their minutes
- written reports of events
- proposals, reports and other internal documents
- formal studies and writings about the events and concepts under study
- newspaper and other mass media articles

Because of the wealth of evidence of this type, it is often possible to cross check the data from several sources to corroborate and augment evidence. Yin (1994) cautions that the researcher should remember that any document consulted was written for some specific purpose and audience other than the case study. This aspect is seen as an important strength of documentary evidence by Shipman (1988) because the writer will have recorded the events without thought to the possibility of a future researcher examining the material, making it independent of the case study. One must be careful, however, to allow for the opinions and biases of the writer that may affect the picture presented.

For the purposes of this study, archival records are those that record the basic data of an organization such as Murdoch University. The collections of data of governments, their departments and other instrumentalities are also of importance.

Thus, reference has been made to:
- various forms of time sequence data from annual and other reports
- budgetary and other financial records
- organisational charts, and
- survey data

The accuracy of data of this type must be carefully checked where possible because the researcher has no control over methods of collection or manipulations of the data such as, for example, rounding. Trends that seem to be revealed must be carefully
checked before causal hypotheses are suggested and possible relationships should be corroborated from other sources.

Interviews have been carried out with a number of participants in the events and processes under study. These interviews have been what Stacey (1969) refers to as unstructured, focussed interviews. In this form of interview, no particular set of words is used for the questions, but the interviewer has a list of topics to be covered. Because of the freedom to explore any issues that arise in the responses of interviewees, the data can be richer than that elicited in a more structured situation. This type of interview also creates opportunities to explore more of the participants’ motives and feelings in the particular situations under discussion.

Structure Of The Report
Following the suggestions of Yin (1994) and Merriam (1998) that the case study report should be a single narrative that is used to describe and analyse the case, such a structure has been adopted for this study.

Chapter One is a review of some of the literature relevant to the study. Attention is given to:

- the nature of the globalisation phenomenon and its effects on the roles and policies of national governments,
- the manifestation of globalising forces on the development of education policy,
- changes in education policy in Australia in the 1980s
the development of Murdoch University from its inception in the late 1960s until the late 1980s, and

- the adoption by Murdoch University of policy for the enrolment of full-fee paying international students.

To enhance the analysis, the literature relevant to the development of particular policies and practices within the University - such as marketing, accommodation, teaching etc - is reviewed as part of the chapters dealing with those topics.

Chapter Two describes and analyses the political, economic, educational and societal forces in the Australian context that led to the set of circumstances in which the formulation and announcement of the legislation permitting universities to enrol full-fee paying international students occurred. A long history of shared responsibility for university funding between students and governments was suspended for a short period after the Whitlam Labor Government’s policy changes of 1974. As the study reveals, later Commonwealth Governments of both labour and conservative persuasions were to gradually reduce their responsibility for funding of the higher education sector under the influence of changes in philosophy on both the political and economic fronts and in reaction to external economic imperatives. The roles played in this changing attitude to the funding of universities by such key figures as Fraser, Hawke, Dawkins, Walsh and others are examined. A number of reports to the federal government highlight a philosophical division between those decision-makers, both educational and political, who believed that education should be part of Australia’s gift of aid to the people of foreign countries and those who saw education as another commodity to be exported along with staples like wool and wheat. These reports and their influence on the debate that ensued are examined in this opening
chapter to further illustrate the forces that underpinned the development of the policy outline announced by Ryan in July 1985.

To complete the picture of the complex set of forces affecting the situation at Murdoch University, Chapter Three examines the progress of this institution from its inception in 1974 until 1985. In following the development of this relatively new university, the study illuminates the issues and concerns that confronted Murdoch at the time of Senator Ryan’s announcement. A picture emerges of an institution under threat, whose student numbers had grown more slowly than predicted by its planners and which was almost entirely financially dependent on ever-decreasing levels of government funding.

In Chapter Four, the process by which the decision was made for Murdoch University to become a provider to full-fee international students is described and analysed. This chapter includes a close study of the proposal to found an international campus for such students at Yanchep, some seventy kilometres north of the South Street campus. This episode in Murdoch’s history has been characterised by many observers as the critical ‘trigger’ to the processes that culminated in the eventual acceptance of the concept of full-fee paying international students on the Murdoch campus. What is certainly revealed in this study is that the proposal initiated a debate, both on the Murdoch campus and in the wider community, not only about the merits of an international campus, but also on the whole concept of the export of education services. Thus, the chapter examines the progress of the debate and the decision-making processes at Murdoch University in the context of a wider discussion of the proposal in the press and by other interested parties, particularly
politicians. The political and economic pressures brought to bear on the Murdoch
decision-makers, and their reaction to them, is similarly considered.

Marketing and recruitment are the focuses of Chapter Five. Developments at the
University are examined in the context of the general Australia-wide movement of
educational institutions into the exporting of their educational services. With the aid
of a review of the relevant literature, the first part of the chapter analyses the
characteristics of the various marketing and recruitment strategies available to
Murdoch’s decision-makers. The remainder of the chapter examines the way in which
the committees responsible for the process of marketing and recruitment selected and
applied appropriate strategies that ensured the successful implementation of Murdoch
University’s full-fee paying international student program.

Chapter Six examines the services provided to full-fee paying international students at
Murdoch University. It reveals that an initial very basic level of provision was
swiftly transformed into an efficient system that delivered a high level of service to
the students. Initially, much of the work was carried out by staff who volunteered
their time for such essentials as orientation programs, or took on extra workloads in
areas such as counselling and the provision of study skills. However, an early
recognition that this did not provide the high level of service required to attract and
retain international students led to policy decisions that created an efficient, specialist
workforce in the international student area. The section dealing with the provision of
student accommodation provides an insight into both the effective decision-making
systems and the increasingly entrepreneurial approach to problem-solving that had
evolved at the University.
Relationships are the focus of Chapter Seven. The chapter first examines the most essential task of a university: the provision of excellent teaching. Murdoch University had developed an enviable reputation for the quality of its teaching of its local students, and this expertise was effectively transferred to the task of providing for its international customers. The chapter also looks at the staff-student and student-student relationships contingent to the teaching process. Included in this discussion is the problem of racism, which, though not a great concern at Murdoch, did manifest itself from time to time during the period covered by this study.
CHAPTER ONE: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Globalisation

The concept of globalisation has been the subject of a great deal of academic argument during the last decade or so. Peraton (2003), writing in The Handbook of Globalization, distinguished three approaches to globalisation.

First, there is the stance of the ‘hyper-globalists’ who believe that globalisation has created a single global economy which has transcended and integrated the world’s major economic regions. They claim that technological changes have created such market integration that financial and corporate bodies, rather than nation states: “Exercise decisive influence over the organization, location and distribution of economic power and wealth.” Because national authority is bound to a specific arena, global markets can escape political regulation, leading to the end of the national management of economies and, particularly, the demise of the welfare state. For this group, globalisation is an irresistible force that will eventually make the concept of individual nations meaningless.

At the other end of the spectrum are those that Peraton called the ‘sceptics’, who do not believe that economies have been subsumed by the supranational companies. They consider the tendency for integration of economies to be a form of ‘inter-nationalisation’ in which the growth of complex international relationships represents fast-growing levels of interaction between still well-defined national economies. The sceptics claim that the so-called ‘globalising forces’ do not lead to the break down of national identity. In fact, they actually cause nations to examine ways in which they can become more internationally competitive as individual entities. Such a view must
assume a somewhat static political structure within a nation and that central
government is either a major trader in its own right or in quite tight command of its
industrial sector.

Somewhere between the two extremes lie those with a ‘transformationalist’ view of
the concept of globalisation. They see globalisation as a process rather than as an end
state. There has been, they claim, a trend towards some fluidity between domestic
matters and global affairs, but nations have retained control. In fact, it is said,
globalisation can only take place when countries decide to liberalise their economic
frameworks. However, they retain control by the maintenance of regulations that
govern economic matters (like agricultural production) and other processes (like
immigration controls). Increasingly, the regulations in force have come to be those
that have been agreed, between individual nations, within bodies like the European
Union or the World Trade Organisation.

In *The Political Economy of Globalization*, Adams and Gupta (1997) supported the
hyper-globalisation view of world economics and politics in which: “The world
community hurtles towards economic and political unity” and:

> Separate national economies are being replaced by a single, integrated global
economy, and basic political functions, which have traditionally been the
province of national authorities, are being delegated to international
institutions including transnational corporations.

They argued that the emergence of a single global economy is the product of both
technological revolution and the adoption “by most of the world’s governments” of
neo-liberal economic reforms that liberalise trade, deregulate production and
“integrate domestic economies in global markets”. Because of this, they claimed,
both economic and political power have moved away from national governments into the hands of, “unelected corporate bodies and unaccountable international institutions”.

Taking the opposite stance, Hirst and Thompson (1999), in *Globalization in Question* argued against the extremist view of globalisation, asserting that this conception is largely a myth. They claimed that in many respects the global economy is less open and integrated than in previous periods of world history. Rather than there being genuinely transnational companies, they said, most companies trade multinationally from single bases of production and marketing. Most of the world’s trade and investment is still driven from Europe, Japan and North America, whose governments still maintain their own philosophies and controls, often through economic cooperatives like the OECD. Hirst and Thompson also said that the proponents of the hyper-globalisation approach continue to call for deregulation of national economies and a dismantling of the welfare state because they believe it to be a burden on economic development. This has had the effect of persuading national governments to adopt neo-liberal economic stances in order to increase their competitiveness in world markets. Governments under such political and economic influences, tend to withdraw their financial support for traditional welfare activities like education and health, because they are conceived to be a drag on economic development.

In *What is Globalization?* Beck (2000) asserted that there are indeed forces acting towards the globalisation of the world’s economic, social and political structures. Like Hirst and Thompson, Beck viewed the concept of globalisation as a tool used by its proponents to convince governments that they need to act in particular ways to
mend their economic health. He thus viewed it as an orchestrated “scare”, which:

“Permits employers and their associations to disentangle and recapture their power to act, that has been restrained by the political and welfare institutions of democratically organized capitalism.” Globalisation is not the inevitable juggernaut proposed by those like Gupta (1997), but a trend, exacerbated by manipulative economic forces and political ideologies, that is uneven in its international distribution and often counterproductive to itself in that it engenders resistance and re-nationalisation because of:

*The political and social paradoxes of a transnational economy - which must be lured and rewarded with the ’removal of barriers to investment’ (meaning the removal of ecological, union, welfare and fiscal constraints), so that more and more labour can be shed and output and profits simultaneously increased.*

Globalisation And Higher Education Policy

Many researchers have observed that globalising forces and the resultant movement of governments towards economic rationalism have engendered education policies that emphasise the economic role to be played by education rather than the more traditional emphasis on its social and cultural purposes. In their study of the effects of this phenomenon in European and Anglo-American universities, Currie et al (2003) stated that:

*The new competitive state within the new global marketplace creates markets where none had existed and encourages public institutions to behave in market-rational ways. Therefore, education becomes less a part of social policy and more a part of economic policy.*

A number of others have also observed that national governments (and also state provincial and regional) have adopted this new view of education. Dudley (1993) said that: “According to the discourses of economic rationalism and human capital, education was but an element of the micro-economy, with the role of providing skilled workers for the economy”. Some governments have even gone so far as to blame
their countries’ economic decline on deficiencies in their education systems (Davis and Guppy 1997).

Considering the situation in Malaysia, Tan (2001) found that higher education policy had been strongly affected by the forces of globalisation in that country because the decision-makers considered that being competitive in a globalised economy was dependent on an increase of university-trained personnel in the workforce. A similar rhetoric was said to be prevalent in Canada, where the Newfoundland Provincial Government’s economic plan: “Proclaimed that human resource development through education and training of a technologically adept and competent workforce was the key to prosperity” (Minty 1997).

Currie and her associates found that this new attitude towards education had resulted in a widespread reform agenda for higher education. The key aspect of this had been an emphasis on the development of competitive and entrepreneurial behaviours within universities, and significant privatisation of institutions and systems (Currie et al 2003). There had also been significant changes in the governance of education, with national governments, in particular, taking a far greater role in setting educational priorities and expecting university managements to achieve those national goals. This had in turn affected the governance of universities:

Since the mid 1980s, national governments have encouraged a strengthening of institutional management by changing the composition of institutional governing bodies, streamlining decision-making within universities, providing greater power and authority to institutional executives, and altering the role of democratic senates and councils from decision-making and control-oriented to advice-oriented. (Currie et al 2003)
Henry et al (2001), in their study *The OECD, Globalisation and Education Policy*, found that globalisation had: “Engendered a new consensus in education, focused on human capital, which interprets education as necessary to the competitive advantage of nations”. This meant that education policy production was now “too important for educators” and led to it being formulated at governmental levels. Policy objectives have become narrower and have been set at higher levels, even, they claimed, in intergovernmental bodies like the OECD. This body promotes globalisation as a ‘good thing’ and puts forward the notion of education being a tool to bring about national and international economic well being through a better-educated workforce.

Furthermore, the publishing of comparative educational statistics by the OECD has affected policy-making in the reported countries, where pressure groups use them as weapons to support their claims for improvement in their areas of interest. Australian Education Minister John Dawkins was cited as an influential policy-maker much affected by the philosophies espoused by the OECD. The role of Dawkins in the reform of Australian higher education policy is discussed in some detail in Chapter Three. As with other writers, Henry et al found that, although the formation of educational goals was increasingly taking place at levels beyond the control of universities, the responsibility for their achievement was still being passed to them.

One of the consequences of new national concepts of the role of higher education has been policy change calling for higher levels of participation in tertiary education (Marginson 1999, Green 1999). This has been one of the most uniform trends during the 1980s and 1990s, occurring in South East Asia (Tan 2001, Mok and Tan 2004), Australia (Dudley 1998), Europe (Slaughter 1998, Tjeldvoll 1998) and many of the less-developed nations (Martin 1997, Adler 1997). Paradoxically, the calls for
increased student numbers, and the emphasis on the national economic benefits of higher education, have taken place at the same time that national economic problems have led to budget cuts, reducing the financial contribution of governments to tertiary education (Smart 1986, Martin 1997, Vidovich and Porter 1997, Fisher and Rubenson 1998). Describing the situation in the UK, Brennan and Shah (1993) said: “The last five years have been marked by a substantial expansion of student numbers but, unlike previous expansions, not accompanied by similar expansions of funding”. To manage this, with lowered levels of public funding, universities have been forced to find other sources for the financing of their activities. This has led to the adoption of such activities as the sale of research, the charging of consulting fees to industry, and the imposition of tuition fees.

In a comparative study of the situations in the UK and the USA, Slaughter (1998) found that different, but convergent policy developments had occurred in both countries since the middle 1980s. In the UK, the Jarret Committee of 1985 had called for higher education to adopt more efficient managerial styles and structures. Later policy changes required universities to serve the economy more efficiently, have clearer links with industry and commerce, and to seek other forms of non-government funding. In an initiative that was also to become apparent in Australia, there were calls for the formation of a single system of higher education institutions to replace the binary system of universities and polytechnics.

In the USA, higher levels of tuition fees evolved in the 1980s and this led, initially, to government provision of greater financial aid to students with the aim of encouraging greater participation in higher education. The existence of a student body with
enhanced spending power led to increased levels of competition for enrolments between universities. This was compounded in the late 1980s by federal laws that: “Promoted competitiveness, deregulation, privatisation and commercialisation of university activities”.

Fisher and Rubenson (1998) found that globalising forces had exerted similar pressures on education policy-making in Canada. In that situation, there were large budget cuts at both federal and provincial levels coupled with a call for increased enrolments in post-secondary education. The funding shortfall caused by these changes was expected: “To be an engine for competitiveness”. The main outcome had been a trend towards the sale of services and the involvement of universities in profit-making joint ventures with industry. Another response to the need for universities to generate their own funds had been that the traditional collegial mode of university governance had been seriously undermined and replaced by corporate models. University administrators claimed that they must become more ‘businesslike’ to compete for non-government dollars.

Education policy in South East Asia was also affected by many of the same convergent trends observed in “Western” countries. Mok and Tan (2004) described the state of affairs that had evolved in Singapore and Hong Kong. The governments of both countries are said to have:

Assumed a very significant role in educational provision, regulation and funding due to the fact that education is seen as an instrument for the state to facilitate economic growth...Notions such as quality education, accountability, choice, competition, quality assurance and (market) responsiveness have become increasingly popular among education policy makers.

With particular reference to Hong Kong, they reported that:
Universities were expected to be competitive in the global market place.

Governments had become selectivity in resource allocation and funding to different universities.

Differential roles had been defined for individual universities, leading to a concentration of particular types of courses at some institutions.

Continued funding had been made dependent on performance of universities as measured against national goals.

The authors noted that the initial phase of the changes took place with significant increases in public expenditure in higher education, but this changed as economic conditions deteriorated in the 1980s.

In Singapore, the effect of globalising forces was described as being a swift adoption by the government of commercial ideas and practices in what the authors called a “tidal wave” of marketisation, privatisation and corporatisation. Despite an economic downturn, the Singapore government continued to increase its commitment to the public funding of tertiary education. However, as in other places, the real value of the funding fell steadily over time. Thus, reforms to higher education had to be accomplished with increased financial inputs from families and individuals. Mok and Tan suggested that universities had been burdened with a “third responsibility” in addition to teaching and research. Now they must engage in revenue generation.

The encouragement of very significantly increased participation of students in tertiary education by governments in South East Asian countries, coupled with economic difficulties in the region, led to a large shortfall of university places in those countries. In several countries this led to discriminatory policies in the allocation of places to
students in an attempt to overcome the social disadvantages of some ethnic groups. This combination, of economic circumstances that did not allow expansion of the number of university places and government policy, was to lead to South East Asian countries becoming the largest source of international full-fee paying students for countries like Australia.

A very different social policy environment developed in countries like Australia. Marginson (1999) contended that one of the major casualties of the growing effects of globalising forces had been the abandonment by governments of their pursuit through the 1960s and 1970s of the objective of reducing socio-economic disadvantage through education. Because of the new political imperatives which called for the reduction of government spending on “welfare” activities like education:

There is less scope for using education to compensate for the effects of class or as a surrogate for income redistribution: the education of elites tends to cross national borders, the material base of the wealthy is increasingly sustained by global activities, and the old Keynesian consensus on national taxation and universal services has collapsed.

The new welfare ethic, Marginson argued is that of self-responsibility so that: “An individual’s success or failure in education is once again seen as a function of the “character” of the student and family”. By extension, though not posited by Marginson, it would seem that this could be seen to include the ability and willingness of students and families to pay increasing amounts towards the cost of their higher education. It is certainly clear from the sources cited above that increased tuition fees for higher education have been a characteristic common to developments in most countries during the late 1980s and the 1990s.
Marginson (1999) also argued against the view, generally accepted by governments, that education, and particularly university education, can be a successful mechanism for the generation of increased national economic competitiveness. He claimed that governments were bound to be disappointed in this endeavour because: “Education cannot in itself generate capital movements or create wealth, except to the extent that it becomes a fully-fledged market commodity in its own right”. Because increased participation levels in university education had not delivered the expected economic benefits, education had itself become marketised and commodified. An important result of this commercialisation had been that some institutions had been able to, or had the potential to, free themselves from the financial strictures that had resulted from globalised national policies. They had achieved this through the sale of full-fee places to international students. These so-called ‘global education players’, could have the ability to free themselves, at least partially, from national regulation by reducing their reliance on government funding.

While the trends brought about by the forces of globalisation were generally seen as largely convergent in nature, there were exceptions reported from several countries. These differences were brought about by both economic and cultural variables (Kosgaard 1997, Mittleman 1997, Cox 1997). Dale (1999) argued against the existence of “increased homogeneity of practice” in education saying that:

*The effects of globalization are mediated in both directions and in complex ways, by existing patterns and structures... Globalization may change the parameters and directions of state policies in similar ways, but it does not override or remove existing national peculiarities.*

Green (1999) also claimed that recent literature concerning the trends in policy change in European education systems showed that there had been a mixture of convergence and divergence in different countries.
Currie *et al.* (2003) described the situation in Norway as one in which the flow of revenues from that country’s oil resources had resulted in only a ‘light’ fall in government funding for universities. This had created (they reported) a minor degree of pressure on universities to seek some other sources of funding. However, Tjeldvoll (1998) claimed that the situation was more complicated. Universities had been granted more money to accommodate increasing enrolments, but funding in real terms had fallen and there was an expectation: “That new activities will have to be financed largely through internal rationalisation and reallocation, or through new sources of income”.

De Angelis (1998) noted that the effects of globalisation had also been minimal in France. In that country, attempts to rationalise or restructure the system had invariably failed, often due to riots and mass demonstrations on the part of students. As a result, De Angelis said, student fees were still very modest and most of the funding and controls were still provided by grants and regulations derived from central public authorities. Resistance to market pressures and competition within and between universities was very high in France. Due to the same cultural and social pressures, France had retained a binary system of higher education institutions.

From the literature examined, there is clear evidence of convergence in most countries of the world around a range of broad policy themes including:

- A government view of education as an economic saviour.
- Insistence on the need to bring education and industry together.
- Emphasis on competitiveness and entrepreneurial behaviour in universities.
• The commodification and sale of education.
• A move to ‘user-pays’ principles and other privatisation mechanisms in the funding of university education.
• Centralisation of education policy decision-making coupled with decentralisation of the regulation and governance of universities.
• Marked corporatisation of the governance of universities.
• Internationalisation in higher education.

The next section examines the degree to which these trends in policy and practice have been reflected in the Australian situation.

Globalisation And Australian Higher Education Policy

The changes in the direction of education policy noted in other countries have also been clearly identified in Australia. Vidovich and Porter (1997) identified the common themes that had developed in higher education policy in Australia as being: budget cuts, privatisation, commodification, ministerialisation (i.e. control of education policy direction by Commonwealth and State governments), managerialism and increased accountability requirements. Australian universities have been forced to define their activities in terms of business rather than educational parameters, competing for funds and students and constantly seeking ways to expand their financial resources (Currie and Newson 1998, Currie and Vidovich 1998).

Marginson and Considine (2000) contended that, in Australia, the global trends actually showed themselves earlier and have been extended further and more uniformly across the system. As early as 1986, Smart had observed that the forces causing change to Australia’s higher education policy were evident by the early
1980s. As in other parts of the world, one of the major consequences of globalising forces on governments had been the rise of a neo-conservative or “New Right” economic philosophy. Smart (1986) claimed that the results of the adoption of such a policy stance by governments had been deregulation, expenditure cuts in ‘welfare’ programs, including health and education, and the encouragement of market forces and ‘user-pays’ principles in higher education. At the same time, the Commonwealth Government had encouraged students to complete twelve years of schooling and qualify for entrance to tertiary education. This had given rise to the same paradox, apparent in other countries, of an expansion of demand for university places coupled with a fall in the level of the real value of funding of the higher education sector.

The culmination of the effects of these new policy directions, exacerbated by balance of trade problems, had been, according to Smart, an “inexorable push” towards privatisation in the university sector. The 1980s had seen: calls for the reintroduction of fees for Australian students, the establishment of education as an export industry, demands that universities seek private sources for their research funding, and proposals for the establishment of fully private universities (such as the Bond University in Queensland). Unlike some other Australian writers, Smart considered that some real benefits to universities might arise from some of the privatisation proposals, provided that adequate safeguards were adopted to: “Protect academic standards and integrity”.

In *Higher Education in Australia: A Way Forward*, Watts (1986) presented a comprehensive review of the social, political and economic pressures that had generated the problems evident in higher education in Australia in the mid 1980s.
He agreed with those who believed that that Australia’s lack of international competitiveness and resultant balance of trade problems were directly related to its declining rate of investment in higher education. More funding was required to increase the rate of participation of the nation’s youth in higher education. A better-educated workforce was essential for the economic well being of Australia. Watts suggested that it was unrealistic to expect significant growth in government financing and suggested that new sources of funding were needed, including: the introduction of tuition fees for all university students; and allowing universities to offer full-fee places, beyond the level of government funded places, to students from anywhere (both overseas and Australian).

Meek (1993) noted the adoption into the higher education sector of many market related mechanisms such as:

Managerial efficiency and strong executive leadership; unit-cost effectiveness; institutional responsiveness to socio-economic demands; technological transfer and commercialisation of research products; effective utilisation of resources (academic staff in particular); funding diversity, particularly in relation to sources of funds; and the introduction of user-pays principles.

These developments took place, Meek argued, because a Commonwealth Government beset with budgetary problems could not fund a huge expansion in university education that occurred in the 1980s. The Australian higher education system had been, in fact, a victim of its own success, according to Meek: “Because higher education is regarded as a significant contributor to both national and individual wealth and property, institutions have had to respond to new environmental influences”. Strong demand for places had developed, especially in courses perceived to enhance career prospects. However universities now had to cater for this demand without increased government investment in the sector.
Meek (1993) identified another change that had begun in Australia in the early 1980s: that of rationalising the higher education system to reduce its drain on the budget. The Fraser Government began reforms in 1981. This had resulted in amalgamations involving twenty-six colleges of advanced education. The trend gathered momentum and culminated in the widespread closures and amalgamations instigated by the Hawke Government in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The implementation of such a major change without any real consultation is one example of how the central government had adopted a dominant role in the formulation of education policy. This dominance was strengthened by the abolition of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC), with its functions being transferred to a new “Super Ministry” of the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET). These and other changes, and the effect that they were to have on the development of Murdoch University, are discussed more fully in Chapters Two and Three of this study.

Among Australia’s academics, one of the main points of contention about the effect of globalising forces on higher education policy has been the change in the manner in which universities are governed. In their book *The Enterprise University*, Marginson and Considine (200) examined the changes that have taken place in the governance of universities in Australia as they have responded to new government policies. They asserted that Australia’s universities are among the most ‘globalised’ of institutions, defining globalisation as: “The growing impact of world systems of finance and economic life, transport, communications and media, language and symbols”. As a result, they claimed, there has been: “A rise of executive governance focussed almost
This rise of executive power has been: “Coincident with and mutually constitutive of, the growing role of market exchange and economic competition”, within and between universities.

In an examination of seventeen Australian universities they noted five emerging trends in the governance of those institutions:

- A new kind of executive power characterised by a will to manage and, in some respects, a freedom to act greater than was once the case.
- The remaking or replacement of collegial or democratic forms of governance with structures that operationalise executive power and create selective mechanisms for participation, consultation and internal market research.
- Enhanced flexibility of personnel and resources, of means of communication, and in the very location of power and authority.
- A discernible decline in the role of academic disciplines in governance.
- New methods of devolution. Superdeans, faculty leader-managers and heads of departments and schools are granted budgeting authority within the framework of institutional plans, performance measures and targets.

Though Murdoch University was not one of the subject universities in Marginson and Considine’s survey, my current study revealed it to be exhibiting many of the same developments under the influence of globalising forces, government policy changes, and more entrepreneurial vice-chancellors, with philosophies of governance in line with the trends outlined above. This is in line with Marginson’s assessment in another publication that Murdoch had moved from what Currie and Vidovich (1998) describe
as an “alternative university” towards a more mainstream position in which Marginson (1997a) designates Murdoch as a “Wannabee Sandstone” university.

In *Universities and Globalization*, Currie and Newson (1998) defined the trend towards more centralised governance as ‘managerialism’ which, they said: “Involves entire institutions in new ways of conceiving of and accomplishing their business; indeed, of defining its activities in terms of business rather than of education”.

Because universities have been made to compete for funds, and indeed students, managers have taken on increased responsibility for managing without consultation. The assumption of this increased level of control has been based on the premise that swift decision-making is needed to gain advantage for the university in the new environment of competitive tendering. Currie and Newson cite Yeatman (1993) as best describing the position of the vice-chancellor under such a managerial structure:

*The Vice-Chancellor becomes the Chief Executive Officer of a higher education commercial enterprise. His or her job is to get employees of the enterprise to perform at an optimal level, not to bestow on them his/her collegial respect. The committee system is replaced by a system of centralized executive management combined with devolution of budgetary management to the School or Faculty level.*

Full-Fee Paying International Students

One of the most important responses by Australia’s universities to the need to generate alternative funding has been the widespread taking up of the opportunity to enrol international students on a full-fee paying basis. As part of its insistence that education become a contributor to the national economy, the Commonwealth Government enacted legislation to allow for this enterprise to occur.
A particularly important source for this study was *The Origins and Evolution of the Commonwealth Full-Fee Paying Overseas Policy 1975-1992* (Smart and Ang 1993). This work outlined the stages of development of the international student industry from the enrolment of a few private students in 1907 to the market oriented policies of the early 1990s. Smart and Ang argued that Australia’s policy direction changed from an initial emphasis on aid to students from developing countries in the immediate post-war years to an alternative view in the 1980s that education was a significant trade item to be marketed overseas. This development occurred in response to several factors, including: the economic rationalist influences that had begun to affect policy formulation in Australia, serious balance of trade problems, and the Commonwealth Government’s need to cut expenditure to reduce its budget deficit.

The success of the Government’s proposal to market university places overseas, was ascribed to the imperative of Australia’s severely under-funded universities to generate new financial resources. There were, however, some early problems due mainly to a lack of clear administrative guidelines to accompany the enabling legislation. It also became clear that some government members and some of its agencies were not fully supportive of the initiative. This led to some confusion and frustration for universities as they attempted to become involved.

Chapter Two of this study examines the issues highlighted by Smart and Ang. It includes some more detailed analysis of the political background to the development of the 1985 full-fee policy and the legislation that followed. The study also deals with the events that occurred after the passing of the enabling legislation and includes an analysis of the argument that took place in both government and academic circles as to
the merits of considering education to be a marketable commodity. Most importantly, consideration of the development of the policy is only one part of the examination of Murdoch University as a particular case of an institution, severely affected by other government policies, responding to the significant new opportunity presented by the full-fee paying initiative.

The concept of education as a market commodity gave rise to an extended debate between Australians at many levels. Even before the announcement of the new policy, the Higher Education Round Table (a group of education unions) had foreseen that a move to full cost recovery from international students would take place (Higher Education Round Table 1984). This group expressed great concern that the Australian Government was about to adopt this policy on the basis of an assumption that all international students were from rich families and could, therefore afford to pay for their education. This, they claimed had been shown not to be the case. The group also stated their belief that Australia benefited from its provision of education to international students in terms of trade, diplomacy and cultural exchange. These benefits might well be lost in a purely market situation.

The wide divergence of opinion about the concept of treating education as just another trade item is well illustrated by the various contributors to *Education as an International Commodity* (Gillespie and Collins, eds. 1986). Barlow (1986) regarded the provision of services to international students to be part of an attempt on Australia’s part to impose a form of cultural imperialism on the countries to which services were provided. Thus, whether paid for or not, the practice was deemed to be morally unacceptable. Burns (1986), though opposed to the concept, accepted the
inevitability of the process of commercialisation, but warned of the many dangers associated with the marketing of education. These included a possible threat to academic standards, social and welfare problems for the students, and industrial and administrative problems for the institutions. Stanford (1986) argued that education was no different to any other commodity and should be treated as such to support the Australian economy. Moreover, to provide it free of charge: “Cannot be justified by economic or social grounds; free education is a transfer from general taxpayers to university graduates who will generally earn more on average in their lifetimes than the average taxpayer”. A ‘middle-ground’ position was taken by Blight (1986), who concluded that the effect of full-fee paying international students on institutions was “substantially positive”. Blight also argued that Australia had a responsibility to provide training for the potential leaders of neighbouring countries, even if it must balance its books by charging for that service.

Murdoch University

From its very inception, Murdoch University had experienced a variety of pressures that shaped its development to the situation in which it found itself in 1985. There had always been some level of conjecture as to the ability of Murdoch to function as an independent university in its own right. In his paper, *The Naming of Murdoch University*, Townsing (1973) observed that little consideration had been given to the naming of the university because the overshadowing debate had been about whether it should be completely autonomous or established in the first instance as a college of the University of Western Australia (UWA). There certainly appears to have been little or no debate about the name, apart from that between Townsing and the Premier of Western Australia. Townsing, the Under Treasurer for Western Australia,
submitted four possible names to Premier Brand. From these, they decided that Murdoch was the most appropriate because of the close association of Professor Sir Walter Murdoch with tertiary education in Western Australia, and passed their recommendation to the State Cabinet, which immediately approved the name. (Interestingly, the other three names also started with M. However, Sir Robert Menzies and Lord Melville were considered to have little connection with WA, and Sir James Mitchell, a popular former governor of WA, to have no particular association with educational matters (Bolton 1984)). The only other contribution to the name debate seems to have been on the part of M. N. Austin the Professor of Classics and Ancient History at UWA. Austin (1968) proposed a name such as New College, in the English tradition, rather than the use of the name of a person. He somewhat facetiously suggested the possibility of “Brand New University”.

_Tertiary Education in Western Australia_ (otherwise know as the Jackson Report of 1967) is the first documentary source in which the concept of a second university for Western Australia was clearly discernable. As such, it represented an important starting place in the development of an understanding of the factors that were to lead to the precarious situation in which Murdoch found itself in 1985.

This report set out clearly the reasons for its recommendation for a new institution, based on an expectation of increasing demand for university education that would overtax the existing University of Western Australia (UWA). In retrospect, the level of demand predicted by the report can be seen to have been greatly overstated, but the buoyant economic atmosphere of the times would no doubt have influenced the committee members. This report also identified the need for a course in Veterinary
Science at the UWA, an observation that was predictive of a crucial factor in the eventual establishment of Murdoch University.

The committee’s recommendation that the new campus should be a college of UWA started a debate about the autonomy of Murdoch University that has continued almost to the present day. The report also contained great deal of information pertaining to the selection of a suitable site for the new institution. Though the selected location was to prove to be a source of considerable problems for the new university in its early days, the argument for its establishment in a relatively undeveloped and poorly serviced area in Perth's developing southern suburbs, appeared to be based on valid assumptions.

Ultimately, Murdoch was established as an autonomous university, but the debate about its status continued. In the Williams Report (Committee of Inquiry into Education and Training 1979) the rise of the influence of economic factors on tertiary planning can be clearly seen. The report questioned the viability of small institutions like Murdoch and recommended an “integration of activities” between Murdoch and UWA. However, another important source, the Birt Report (Committee of Inquiry into the Future of Murdoch University 1979), demonstrated a considerable level of support for the maintenance of the autonomy of Murdoch and suggested several possible mechanisms to enhance the growth of its student numbers. Nevertheless, the debate continued with Birt, the chairman of the committee, submitting a letter to the Minister for Education in which he voiced his minority view that, “It would be best for Murdoch to become part of the University of Western Australia, concentrating on studies in biological and environmental sciences at the Murdoch site “ (Birt, 1979).
The report was a valuable source of material about the development of Murdoch, in that it not only gathered and presented statistical material, but also commented significantly on the philosophy and the role played by Murdoch in the Western Australian tertiary education context.

In his book, *It Had Better Be A Good One*, Professor Geoffrey Bolton (1985) described the development of Murdoch from its conceptualisation in 1970 until 1984. As a member of the Planning Board, Foundation Professor of History, an inaugural member of the Murdoch Senate, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, and subsequently Chancellor, Bolton is a unique source of information about both the events and the political and philosophical influences that shaped them. Bolton's candid observations of his own stance during the crucial debate about the formulation of what was to become known as the “Murdoch ethos” revealed that he held a somewhat more conservative view than that of the majority of the members. However, he reported unanimity in acceptance of the concepts. He observed that, with hindsight, he had realised that the Planning Board had lacked a vision of the qualities that would be needed to entice students to enrol at Murdoch University rather than the safer (because better known) alternatives of UWA and WAIT. The discussion of this shortcoming provides a valuable insight into the reasons for the lack of enrolments, which was one of the major factors contributing to the situation in which the university was to find itself by the mid 1980s. Bolton identified yet another source of Murdoch’s early problems when he concluded that:

*With hindsight it can be seen that not enough was done to spell out the practical implications of the Murdoch ethos, and that a significant number of the problems that were to beset Murdoch University in its early years were based on that lack of analysis.*
This internal lack of clarity about the philosophies of the university, which led to misunderstandings both on the Murdoch campus and within the wider community, was also of concern to Schoenheimer (1976), who foresaw that the initial emphasis at Murdoch on teaching and learning with particular concern for society and its problems would fade in the light of both internal and external pressures.

The problems and pressures facing Murdoch University were highlighted by Professor Peter Boyce, Vice-Chancellor of Murdoch University, in his address at the Murdoch University 10th Anniversary Ceremony in 1984. Boyce said:

*Murdoch enters its second decade buoyed by tangible signs of government and public confidence while burdened by tightened budgets, confused or apparently inconsistent priorities in tertiary education, and ever increasing intrusion in its housekeeping by a remote bureaucracy headquartered in the National Capital.*

Boyce argued that there was a pressing need to seek alternative sources of funding for staff and student amenities and urged corporations and professional bodies to assist Murdoch with funds for such things as scholarships, the endowment of Chairs, and capital works. In an interesting prediction, Boyce stated his expectation that by the end of the next decade the Murdoch population would include a much higher proportion of international students: “Possibly on the basis of full cost recovery”.

Another tension that was to affect Murdoch’s immediate future was foreshadowed in Boyce’s expression of his frustration with what he visualised as cumbersome decision-making processes at the University, hampering his own ability to respond effectively on issues of growth and economics. He described the system as:

*A non-hierarchical, decentralised assortment of academic dukedoms, in each of which sluggish bouts of consultation and cross-referencing among*
representative committees are meant to occur with eventual outcomes often reflecting the lowest common denominator.

The Proposed Yanchep International Campus Of Murdoch University

The only extensive analysis of the Yanchep International Proposal is that of Stone (1987). Stone saw this initiative as being of crucial importance in the debate about the privatisation of higher education in Australia because it was the first to propose the establishment of a completely separate campus for full-fee paying international students. Unlike several other commentators of the time (see Chapter Four of this study) Stone clearly understood that the Yanchep campus was to have been a ‘hybrid’ institution in that it was to be privately funded, by the property developer Tokyu and students fees, but to be under the academic management of Murdoch University.

Stone’s article briefly traced the rise of the phenomenon of the commodification of education in Australia and the enthusiasm of both the Commonwealth and the Western Australian State Governments for the marketing of education services into South East Asia. Governments at the time were facing the considerable problem of funding a swiftly expanding education sector in the face of an economic downturn that was placing enormous pressures on their budgetary outcomes. “In this environment, the “New Right” and other free market proponents have had increasing influence in moving education to a consumer oriented market system” (Stone 1987).

Because the focus of the article is on the Yanchep proposal itself, Stone does not provide an extensive coverage of all of the complex political factors that that gave rise to the Commonwealth Government’s policy changes that allowed educational institutions to enrol full-fee paying international students. Mention is made of the
Jackson and Goldring reports, which made a significant contribution to the debate. However, Stone attributed to the Jackson Report a far stronger stance than is actually contained in the document. She wrote: “The Jackson Report, with its underlying free market philosophy, took a much more radical approach by suggesting that such aid be withdrawn and education sold as a commodity”. The Jackson Report did call for Australia’s Overseas Student Charge to be raised to full-cost levels and for education to be developed as an export sector, but it also recommended an expanded scholarship scheme: “A generous merit scholarship scheme should be introduced on a considerably larger scale than the present government-to-government scheme”.

A very important part of Stone’s article was her discussion of the factors that led to the demise of the Yanchep Campus project. Opposition to the scheme by academic unions, both at Murdoch and at a national level, was identified as a major factor. Another crucial factor was the influence on the debate at Murdoch of the report of the Hill Committee, a group established within the University to examine the philosophical and academic viability of the proposal. Stone identified four major points of contention proposed within the Hill Report. These could be summarised as:

- concerns about equity,
- a potential skewing of course offerings towards a narrow vocational curriculum,
- the potential for Yanchep to become “fully private”, and
- the risk of a decline in academic standards in a rush to enrol students at the new campus.

The counter arguments, outlined by the Hill Committee itself, and proposed within the *Interim Report* of the Murdoch International Campus Task Force, which had been
set up to examine the feasibility of the proposal, were not examined in Stone’s article. For example, the article does not acknowledge that: while the Hill Committee had certainly found that there was a risk of developing a skew in the balance of courses, it had also recognised that this had already occurred in Australian universities in response to local students’ demand in the same academic areas as those sought by international students. Hill also contended that: “Despite the possible difficulties, however, universities can surely design and administer safeguards to keep such situations under control”.

Stone recognised that the other major factors in the ultimate rejection of the Yanchep proposal were the involvement of the Western Australian Institute of Technology (WAIT) in a parallel feasibility study to that of Murdoch, and a growing disenchantment with Murdoch as a partner on the part of the State Government. Stone concluded that that the proposal ultimately failed because the developer, Tokyu, decided, in the face of growing opposition at Murdoch, and a less than favourable result contained in the feasibility study carried out by WAIT, that the financial risks were too great for it to proceed with the project.

Summary

Some analysts of Globalisation, sometimes referred to as the ‘hyper-globalists’, would have their readers believe that the world is being (or has been) taken over by huge supranational companies. They claim that the influence of these companies is so great that nations have been unable to resist the pressures on their economies and economic policies. Many of these hyper-globalists predict the end of nation states as we know
them, claiming that the world will be divided into spheres of influence by the supranationals.

Another group, sometimes referred to as the ‘sceptics’, argue that the whole concept of globalisation is a myth that has been promulgated by those who wish to scare governments and their constituents so that they will take tight, regulated control of their economies.

Both of these views are extreme and do not represent the world that is presented by most of the literature. Certainly neither is a picture of the situation in Australia. While governments of both political colours have deregulated the Australian economy to some extent, they have retained fairly firm control over the decision-making process. One has only to examine the inability of Qantas to take a dominant position in aviation and the continuing debate about media laws to see that the large companies are still subject to government controls.

Those writers with a more moderate, developmentalist view of globalisation say that what has evolved over the past three decades is a level of convergence of economic philosophies among many of the world’s governments; particularly those in the so-called ‘developed’ nations. These governments have adopted neo-liberal economic policies characterised by deregulation and the liberalisation of trading conditions. The role of governments is seen as one of enabling commerce and industry to succeed while reducing their own impact. Leaders in such an environment speak of the value of “small government” and seek to reduce levels of government spending.
One of the areas subjected to significant and continuous budget cuts has been the welfare sector, including education. Some of the analysts argue that this is due not only to economic policy, but also to a neo-conservative view that, in the same way that industry has been made more independent, so should the individual become more self-reliant. Thus, all should compete on merit for benefits such as health and education. For this reason we have seen the rise of ‘user-pays’ principles in the education sector with ever-increasing levels of financial contribution by students towards the cost of their education.

Another strong trend identified in the literature is that governments have developed an expectation that the education sector will make a contribution to the economy, instead of being the passive recipient of taxpayers’ funds. Under such a regime, universities are expected to compete for the government funding that is available, especially in the area of research, and must themselves generate significant levels of funding from other sources.

One important source of this extra funding has been the growth of an industry in the sale of full-fee places to international students. While there has been a significant level of opposition to this concept in academic circles, several writers in that area have written in support of the commodification of education. These supporters have generally taken the fatalistic view that no more funding will be coming from government, so universities should take every opportunity to attempt to gain a level of financial independence.
Murdoch University was founded at around the time that the economic forces that have been discussed above began to become apparent in Australia. There is general agreement among those who have written about the development of Murdoch University, that it was subjected to severe pressures because of changes in national and state government economic policies as it attempted to establish its identity. As Murdoch adapted, it gradually assumed the features that were becoming apparent in other universities as they reacted to globalising forces in similar ways to universities throughout the world. Commentators on Murdoch have noted the gradual shift from its earlier ethos of a generally cooperative and consultative administrative style to a more centralised, bureaucratic and corporatised ethic. The next part of my study examines in more detail the factors, both internal and external, that created the pressures that led to Murdoch’s vulnerable position in the mid 1980s.

More generally, though, to date there has been little detailed research of Murdoch’s fascinating involvement in the first attempt in Australia to fund a separate university campus entirely with private finance and student tuition fees. Stone’s assessment was that Yanchep was a failed enterprise, and so it was. However, what Stone and others have not recognised is the undeniable fact that this incident was the crucial trigger for Murdoch’s early involvement in the full-fee paying international student program. The central objective of my current study is to examine Murdoch’s acceptance of the opportunity to launch such a program and to analyse the development of its emerging policies and practices.
CHAPTER TWO: AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION FOR SALE

The development and implementation of policies for the enrolment of full-fee paying international students at Murdoch University were greatly influenced by factors impinging on the whole of Australia’s higher education sector. Significant changes of attitude on the part of successive Commonwealth Governments created the fragile situation in which Murdoch and other Australian Universities found themselves during the middle to late 1980s. This chapter examines the pressures and effects produced by these changing governmental philosophies on the funding and management of higher education, as well as on the situation of international students in the system.

On 22 March 1985, the Minister for Education in the Hawke Labor government, Senator Susan Ryan, announced that her party had developed a new policy that would allow Australia's universities, for the first time, to offer places to international students on a full fee-paying basis (Commonwealth of Australia 1985). In October 1985, Ryan and the Minister for Trade and Industry, John Dawkins, both encouraged the universities to take advantage of the opportunities created by the new policy (Ryan 1985, Dawkins 1985). This early involvement of Dawkins is indicative of the crucial and on-going role that he was to play in the subsequent policy developments that are discussed below. Legislation to enable the implementation of the policy was introduced into the House of Representatives on 20 November 1985 (Commonwealth of Australia 1985b) and the announcement by Minister Ryan of the official guidelines for the implementation of the policy, followed, in February 1986 (Ryan 1986). As we shall see, this was a momentous policy shift with broad ramifications for the future shape and direction of Australian tertiary education.
Neither the concept of tuition fees nor the presence of international students in Australian universities was brand new in 1985. There had been international students enrolled from as early 1904 and varying levels of tuition fees had existed in most universities up until 1974, when they were abolished by the Whitlam Labor Government (Williams 1989b). Prior to 1974, financial assistance to universities was provided by both the Commonwealth and State Governments: grants for recurrent expenditure were shared on the basis of $1 provided by the Commonwealth Government for each $1.85 available from State Government grants and tuition fee income. In the case of buildings, land, equipment and special research grants, costs were shared on a $1 for $1 basis (Universities Commission, 1975). All student places were partially funded by a system of tuition fees levied upon students on a per-course basis. In the case of Australian students and private international students, this implied a direct, personal contribution to the cost of tuition. In reality, however, a large number of Australian students had these fees paid by the Commonwealth Government Scholarship program, and many others benefited from State Government schemes in such areas as teacher training and the public service (Marginson 1993). After the establishment of the Colombo Plan in 1950, with an initial intake of about one thousand students, many international students had their fees paid, wholly or in part, by the Commonwealth Government as part of its foreign aid program (Williams 1989b). As the demand for inclusion in this scheme increased and the potential expense to the Australian taxpayer grew, the Commonwealth Government imposed visa controls to limit the numbers of international students studying at Australian Universities (Lim 1989).
At the time of the announcement of the assumption of university funding by the Commonwealth Government in 1974, international students represented about 7% of the total full-time enrolments in Australian universities and of these about 45% were "private" students i.e. not supported by a government aid programme (Universities Commission, 1975). The new funding arrangements, as from the beginning of 1974, abolished fees for all students, including those from overseas countries. The immediate effect of this was that the Commonwealth assumed the financial responsibility for the tuition of about 3000 extra (previously fee-paying) international students. To limit the potential liability generated by this policy change, a notional ceiling of 10 000 was placed on the number of international students to be funded (there being about 6000 in 1975).

The Whitlam Labour government of 1972 was elected with a socialist reform platform containing policies for significantly increased Commonwealth involvement in education funding at all levels. "Equity" and "Equality of Opportunity" were to be the philosophical keys to the allocation of funds: “Education is the key to equality of opportunity... Education should be the great instrument for the promotion of equality” (Whitlam 1972). In particular, in an attempt to make tertiary education more accessible to students from the lower socio-economic groups within Australian society, the new government committed the Commonwealth to the total funding of tertiary education in return for the abolition by State Governments of tuition fees in their tertiary institutions. Perhaps by default, the costs of international students were included in the extra financial responsibility assumed by the Commonwealth Government. Though the establishment of the Commonwealth Government as the major supplier of higher education funding would have appeared to be the highway to
future reliability and security of financial support for students and the universities, it became, in fact, what Smart called a “cashless cul de sac” (Smart 1986a). Faced with increasing demands in all budget areas and a deteriorating national accounts situation, successive governments reduced the Commonwealth’s commitment to the funding of higher education. The period between the Whitlam initiative of 1974 and Ryan's international student fee announcement in 1985 saw a slow but inexorable growth of pressures and ideological changes that appear to have resulted in the establishment of an atmosphere in which the general re-introduction of tertiary fees could be seen by political forces as acceptable to the Australian electorate (Smart 1986a, Marginson 1993).

The Genesis Of Full-Fees
In the latter half of the 1970's, the conservative Fraser Commonwealth Government found itself facing potential budget deficits of huge proportions and took steps to both cut expenditure and increase revenue. This was the period of the so-called "razor gang" - a group of senior cabinet ministers in the Fraser government, entrusted with the task of establishing the extent and direction of savings that could be made by large reductions in Commonwealth expenditure. This approach was compounded by the expressed philosophy of "New Federalism" which proposed the return of the responsibility for much expenditure to the States. With this kind of atmosphere pervading the decision-making in Canberra in 1979, it is not surprising to find the Fraser government imposing an annual visa charge, ranging from $1500 to $2500 per international student to partially offset the cost of providing their education in Australian institutions. The same visa mechanism also established control over entry rights for such students. In addition to being required to pay the charge, students were
required to return to their home countries on completion of their courses, with re-entry applications from them barred for two years. The statement that accompanied the announcement of the visa charge policy made it clear that this was a mechanism to enable a significant increase in the number of international students studying in Australia by partly offsetting the cost of educating them (MacKellar 1979). This new approach to the funding of places for international students was the beginning of a constant progression towards the ultimate creation of full-fee programs. Over the next four years, the Overseas Students Service Charge was slowly increased so that by the time of the election of the Hawke government in 1983 it had reached a level that, notionally, represented 33% of the actual cost of the provision of courses (Throsby 1986).

At the same time, overall expenditure on higher education continued to fall in real terms. The CTEC report to Senator Ryan in 1986 summarises the situation:

- Total government outlays were virtually unchanged in real terms over the decade [1975 - 1985] at $2,100 million even though the number of students increased by one-third and total student load (in terms of equivalent full-time students) increased by one quarter.
- Total public sector funding of higher education as a proportion of GDP, which doubled between 1965 and 1975, declined by more than one-third between 1975 and 1985.
- Operating grants to higher education increased in real terms by sixteen per cent during the decade (compared with an increase of twenty-five percent in student load, but capital expenditure in 1985 was less than one fifth of the real level in 1975.
- Funds for equipment did not increase in real terms, even though the student load increased by a quarter.

(Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission 1986.)

The report asserts that the system had absorbed some of the loss in funding by rationalisation of smaller institutions, increased staff-student ratios and the using up of “spare capacity” in institutions, but there was little or no capacity for further savings of this type. (As will be shown below, Dawkins was to find considerable room for
further rationalisation.) There was, the report continues, an urgent need for expansion of capital work spending and for the replacement of worn and obsolete equipment. The government was, however, unimpressed and, though Ryan pressed for some moderate increases, Dawkins her successor as Minister, made the situation very clear: “The climate of budgetary restraint must limit the Commonwealth’s scope for continued real increases in higher education funding” (Dawkins 1988). Dawkins went on to categorise the possible alternative sources of funding available to the sector:

- There would be more student places available due to the income derived by the Commonwealth from the new Higher Education Charge.
- Income from direct investment and consultation fees from industry.
- Export of education services.
- Endorsements, bequests and alumni contributions.
- State governments.

Most of the suggestions must have seemed small comfort to those in universities. The level of private investment from such sources as industry, alumni etc had remained static at about five per cent of the sector’s funding from 1975 to 1984 (Marginson 1997) and there seemed little prospect for rapid expansion. Seeking additional funding from State Governments also seemed to be a blind ally: “We can expect to see no substantial help from the states in the immediate future - especially when they are presently seeking to prune their education budgets rather than expand them” (Smart 1986a).

Labor Government Policy

More than any other factor, it was the economic philosophy of the Hawke Labor government that led to the notion of the acceptability of the charging of fees for the
tertiary education of international students. Faced with massive problems in the size of deficits in the national budget and in the nation's international balance-of-trade accounts (Smart and Dudley 1990, Johns 1989), the powerful central group of policy-makers turned away from traditional Labor solutions (based in the philosophy of social equity compacts) towards the seemingly successful New Right solutions as exemplified by the so-called "Thatcherism" of the U.K. and "Reaganomics" of the U.S.A. (Stokes and Edmonds 1990).

The statements of Hawke and his Cabinet Ministers Keating, Walsh, Dawkins and Button, in particular, increasingly emphasised deregulation of the financial sector and development of "free-market" and "user-pays" strategies in all sections of the Australian economy. The new approach extended even to proposals for the privatisation of some public enterprises. This was a radical departure for a political party based in the union movement with a strong socialist tradition and opened the way to future debate on the prospect for the establishment of private universities (Smart 1986a, Stone 1988). The proposed outcome of these processes, extending beyond the traditional export industries to include such areas as education and health, was to be improved international competitiveness and a solution to the balance-of-trade problem through increased export income and decreased external debt. John Button, a major strategist in the ALP, held a strong belief in the efficacy of government intervention in the restructuring of industry (Kuhn 1987, Button 1986) and the benefit of extending this to education:

>This change can be brought about by industry, as represented by industrial organizations, unions and relevant parts of government, and seeking to influence community attitudes towards the development of policies and practices which, while outside the direct ambit of industry policy are of considerable relevance to industry. Such policy areas include education and training.  

(Button 1986)
Prime Minister Hawke’s view of education’s role in the restructuring of Australian industry was also plain: “In a rapidly changing economic environment, the entire education, training and re-training system must be placed under constant review to ensure its maximum relevance to the requirements of a changing economic environment” (Hawke, 1983).

The Influence Of John Dawkins

Of particular interest to this study is the influence of John Dawkins in his roles as Minister for Trade and Industry and Minister for Education, Training and Development. In his address to the Export of Education Services Conference, convened in October 1985 to consider the findings of a Department of Trade mission that had explored the potential for the export of education services to Southeast Asian countries, Minister for Trade and Industry Dawkins pushed strongly for the adoption by universities of opportunities to enrol full fee-paying international students. By doing this, he claimed, universities would help to overcome Australia’s serious balance of trade deficit. He went on to predict that the income from the export of education services had the potential to surpass that of manufacturing industry within three years (Dawkins 1985).

After succeeding Ryan as Minister for Education, Dawkins created a new mega-ministry that combined Education with Training and Development. He abolished CTEC in 1987, including its functions in a new much smaller body: the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET). Smart (1989) argued that the body was deliberately made ineffectual, by its small size and severe understaffing, to allow:
Unprecedented scope for direct ministerial intervention in higher education policy. In the absence of CTEC - the traditional independent expert buffer body between the Government and the institutions - and with the benefit of the ‘profile’ mechanism, the Minister for education has, for the first time in the history of Australian higher education, a capacity to intrude directly in the internal affairs of formerly autonomous tertiary institutions.

In his Ministerial Statement of September 1987 (Dawkins 1987a) Dawkins restated his conviction that education must become a significant contributor to the health of the Australian economy: “In other statements in the Budget context, the Government has made clear its determination that our education and training system should play a central role in responding to the major economic challenges which still confront us”.

In his ‘Green Paper’, Dawkins demonstrated the extent to which he, like the other members of the Hawke Labor Government, had been affected by the forces of globalisation:

*The Australian economy will be increasingly integrated with the international economy, and this trend will inevitably lead to far greater emphasis on Australia’s level of international competitiveness. This integration has particular implications for the relative efficiency of the Australian labour force, not only in terms of comparative wage rates but also in terms of education and skill levels.* (Dawkins 1987b)

In particular, Dawkins appears to have been strongly influenced by the ideas of the OECD. In the Green Paper, he cites OECD statistics that support his arguments for change. This is in spite of his claims, in another section of the paper, that: “Each country has developed its own distinctive approach to the provision of education and training, and available statistics are not only dated but also inconsistent in several important aspects”. Henry *et al* (2001) asserted that Dawkins was very much influenced by OECD thinking. They pointed to his citation of the OECD’S *Universities Under Review* twice in the Green Paper, where, they say, Dawkins:
“Interprets the statements in the document, not as a simple documentation of trends, but a rallying call to action”.

Dawkins also foreshadowed the development of measures for the better allocation of resources to the tertiary sector, allowing for some competition between institutions and for the potential for universities to increase their levels of funding from private sources. This stance is given further substance in the proposals of the Green Paper in which it is stated that Australia’s economy was in need of a substantial increase in university graduates, but that the Commonwealth Government would be unable to meet the costs of such an expansion so that other sources of funding would need to be found (Dawkins 1987b). This built upon and extended the philosophical approach that was apparent in Senator Ryan's announcement of the guidelines for full fee international students. This pronouncement included the statement:

As part of the Government's program to improve export performance and its contribution to economic growth, attention is being given to developing Australia’s services skills not only for domestic purposes, but also to earn income from overseas sources. The Government ...considers that certain institutions have the ability to market these courses both in Australia and overseas. (Ryan 1986.)

As well as the constant reference to the need for a broadening of Australia’s export base, there was also an indication that some of the additional cost would be met from savings produced in a rationalisation of Australia’s tertiary education system.

At the time of these policy proposals, Australia had a so-called “Binary System” of tertiary education institutions comprised of universities and colleges of advanced education. In the Green Paper and the subsequent White Paper, a new Unified National System was proposed under which the number of institutions would be
significantly reduced (Dawkins 1988). This proposal was of great significance to small universities like Murdoch because the intention of the new policy was clear:

*While there will always be a diversity of higher education institutions in terms of their mission and style, the Government encourages institutions with a student load in the 2000 - 5000 EFTSU range and with little prospect of substantial future growth to give serious consideration to their future as independent institutions.* (Dawkins 1998a)

And in a direct reference, the paper comments: “In addition, the Commonwealth would support rationalisation of higher education in Western Australia and notes that the Senates of Murdoch University and the University of Western Australia have begun discussions”. The ramifications for Murdoch University of this aspect of Dawkins’ new policy directions as well as that of his clear statements of attitude towards the management of universities are discussed in more detail later in this study.

The View Of The Opposition Parties

That the political climate was ripe for the introduction of a policy for the enrolment of full-fee international students can also be seen in statements from the other side of the political spectrum. In a debate on the Overseas Student Charge in 1985, the Liberal opposition spokesman on education, Peter Shack, strongly supported an increase in the charge to 45% of the real cost of provision by 1986/87 and advocated a progression to unlimited access to Australia's tertiary education institutions for international students willing and able to pay fees (Commonwealth of Australia 1985b). This, he claimed, would be of great benefit to international students because it would enable many more eligible applicants to take up places denied to them because the Australian taxpayer was bearing too high a proportion of the cost. Shack was not, however, unmindful of the other important beneficiary, “Australia has the capacity and the skilled manpower rapidly to become a major exporter of educational
services.” Outside of the Parliament, Shack declared himself in support of the concept of allowing international students to enrol in full-fee courses (Scott 1985).

John Hodges, the (Liberal) Member for Petrie, argued that the whole system should become market-based. He proposed that those Australians who “missed out” on a university place after the normal entry procedures (based on competitive entry scores) should be able to purchase a position on the same basis as would be available to international students under the new legislation (Commonwealth of Australia, 1985b). This statement was in accord with the ideas of many of those on the Government side including Finance Minister Peter Walsh, for example, who was a strong proponent of tuition fees for all university students, including Australians. With the support of Prime Minister Hawke, Walsh had proposed to Cabinet a $1400 annual tuition fee for university students. This move was rejected when Walsh was outmanoeuvred by Ryan in the Cabinet room (Ryan 1986, Walsh 1995). Of course, the final victory went to the New Right when the Higher Education Charge for Students (HECS) was introduced after Dawkins replaced Ryan as Minister for Education and accepted the recommendation of the Wran Committee (Committee on Higher Education Funding 1988).

Only the Australian Democrats seemed to have a view opposing the introduction of tuition fees for international students. Their spokesman, Senator Michael Macklin, declared that his party believed that the education of international students should be seen purely as a facet of Australia's overseas aid programme (Commonwealth of Australia1985a). He claimed that Australia already benefited significantly from an annual expenditure of $135 million by students while in residence in Australia.
Pressure Groups

The government’s programs for the increased role of tertiary education in the economic progress of Australia were also strongly driven by the economic bureaucracy and private financial interests (Marginson 1993). In his foreword to the report of the Bureau of Industry Economics, bureau chief, Professor Brian Johns, said:

*With the balance of payments difficulties facing Australia in recent years, there is a need to improve our export performance and reduce the import bill. A sustainable improvement in trade performance requires a shift in exports away from agricultural and mineral commodities to a greater reliance on manufactured goods and services. Within the services sector, the export of educational services, particularly at the tertiary level, is widely regarded as having great potential for expansion.*

Similarly, the Industry Assistance Commission (1989) highlighted the export of education services as part of a solution to improve Australia’s poor economic performance and continuing balance of trade deficits. Janet Holmes à Court, speaking for financial interests, asserted that taking fee-paying international students was a way in which the country could earn money to overcome its “great financial troubles” (*The West Australian* 1985g). The Committee for Organisational Development of Australia went even further, calling for an extension of fees to all students, including Australians (West 1985). This sentiment was echoed by the editor of the *Australian Financial Review*: “If this represents the thin edge of the wedge for the reintroduction of tertiary fees for well-to-do Australian students and their families, so much the better (*Australian Financial Review* 1985.)

The Academic Lobby

In general, both staff and students of Australia’s universities expressed their opposition to the concept of education as an export commodity and the imposition of tuition fees. Jane Nicholls, research officer with FAUSA, stated that FAUSA opposed
the introduction of fees for “all sorts of reasons” (West 1985a). Part of this opposition was on the basis that education should not be treated as a commodity, but there was also concern that international students would be able to be admitted to some courses at a marginal cost, filling up places in a course that was already costed, and thus subsidising the Australian education system (a position Nicholls describes as “immoral”). Further there was the fear that once the concept was established, fees would be extended to all students. Peter McGregor of Macquarie University spoke out against the consideration of education as a commercially exploitable commodity (Nicholls 1985b). Professor Robert Street (University of Western Australia) warned that an influx of fee-paying international students would have an adverse effect on the quality of education available to Australian students because of dilution of the quality of the facilities by overcrowding or lack of staff (The West Australian 1985h).

Student representative Mike Schapper of the University of Western Australia claimed that the imposition of fees would have no benefits for either Australian or international students and would see the inevitable end to aid programs for overseas countries (The Australian 1986). Steven Gan of the University of New South Wales said that the students were mounting a strong campaign against the charging of fees which they saw as being unfair to the countries involved (The Australian 1985).

There was, however, a level of support in certain quarters. Professor Helen Hughes of the Australian National University put the case that bottlenecks and delays that prevented the export of education must be overcome:

*Instead of earning export income from education, Australian taxpayers are subsidising the foreign students studying in Australia regardless of their country of origin or family income. Because the cost is borne by the Australian system, foreign students are taking places from Australians.*

(Dawson 1985)
Dr Don Watts, Head of the Western Australian Institute of Technology, was another strong advocate of the export of education services (Trinca 1985d). As will be shown, this dichotomy was to be reflected on the Murdoch University campus, creating internal pressures in the period during which the crucial decisions about full-fee international students were to be made.

Aid Or Trade?
The opposing philosophies of "education-as-aid" and "education-as-trade" are also central issues in several reports, originally commissioned by the Fraser government, which were presented to the Hawke government during the period in which the decision in favour of allowing the enrolment of full-fee paying international students was made. Most influential in the debate were the reports of two committees, which were tabled in 1984. One of these, chaired by John Goldring, had been set up to review policy in regard to private international students (Committee of Review of Private Overseas Students Policy, 1984) and the other, chaired by Sir Gordon Jackson, to review Australia's overseas aid programme (Committee to Review Australia’s Overseas Aid Program, 1984).

The Jackson Committee’s report contained a great deal of discussion about the correct levels and the target countries for Australian aid funding. In particular, it proposed that the main emphasis for the giving of aid should be to promote the economic development of the recipient less-developed countries.

The over-riding thrust of aid policy is development; indeed, aid has become synonymous with developmental assistance. Sustained development is dependent on growth with equity. Without growth, there can be little redistribution. Without equity, growth does not lead to development.

The report recognised the role of education in this process:
Education is critical to the development of human resources. Although Australia has strengths in this area, it is missing opportunities to make a substantial impact on education in developing countries. A new approach to the education of developing country students in Australia is needed.

Assistance for education within developing countries should be emphasised in bilateral country aid programming. More support should be given to curriculum development and teacher training for primary secondary and vocational schools.

The committee warned against too much prominence being given to the use of aid to promote the political or economic interests of Australia rather than genuinely humanitarian objectives in the recipient countries. With this basic philosophy, the Committee’s recommendations on education lean heavily towards the provision of education as a genuine aid item. Under the scheme recommended by the Committee, ten thousand international student places at Australian universities would be reserved and fully funded by the Commonwealth for students from countries defined as being in most need. To ensure that the scholarships were directed to areas of genuine need, the Committee recommended that:

(a) The existing Australian government-to-government scholarship scheme should be retained at current levels in the context of country and regional aid programming.
(b) New ‘merit scholarships should be awarded directly by post-secondary institutions in Australia. To ensure a developmental orientation, the merit scholarship scheme should be based on developmental criteria.
(c) ‘Special’ scholarships should be provided to give balance to the student intake. Since it is impossible to administer scholarships on a means basis for foreign students, these special scholarships should emphasise opportunities for disadvantaged groups.

That is, Australia would increase its aid to those countries.

It was also proposed that the real level of Australia’s educational aid be recognised by: “Making explicit the hidden subsidy of $70 million that represented the net cost of educating students from developing countries in Australia”. Some of the funding for
the proposed scholarship scheme would be provided by gradually increasing the Overseas Student Charge for non-scholarship international students so that by the mid 1990s they would be paying the full cost of their education in Australia. The funding could then be redirected to the scholarship scheme. Meanwhile, the Committee said, Australia should: “Maintain a welcoming attitude towards developing country students. In the longer term, foreign students should be accepted on the basis of available places, academic performance and a full economic fee”.

These latter recommendations of the Jackson Report were very much in tune with the ideas of those who saw education as a possible new export industry. The report was represented in some quarters as recommending that private international students should have virtually unrestricted access to Australian tertiary education provided that they met entrance requirements and were charged fees that genuinely met the costs of their education. These proponents of the concept of the marketing of education used the report to support their arguments, carefully ignoring the major emphasis on the use of education as foreign aid. In their view, some places could still be provided on a subsidy basis as part of Australia's aid programme. Those places, however, would be more carefully targeted to areas of need, to students of superior ability and to the provision of opportunities for international students to make contributions in areas of importance to Australia's own developmental needs (Lim 1989).

An education mission, set up by the Australian Department of Trade, at the insistence of Dawkins, to examine the opportunities for export of educational services to South-East Asia and Hong Kong, also reported to parliament at this time (Government Education Mission to South East Asia and Hong Kong 1985). This report strongly
supported the argument in favour of opening the system to full fee students when asserting that there would be strong demand for fee paying places from Malaysia and Indonesia in particular. The report also indicated that a substantial proportion of this increased demand could be traced to the imposition of a full fee policy by Britain in 1980 which had resulted in a drop of 27% in Malaysian enrolments in UK universities by 1983 (Williams, 1984). It was felt that Australian universities were geographically well located to take advantage of this particular potential market. In her report to the Federation of Australian University Staff Associations (FAUSA), which she represented as well as the ACTU, Jane Nicholls, expressed some reservations about the size of the potential market (Nicholls, 1985). She claimed that Australia would prove to be too expensive, in terms of both fees and living costs, for Malaysian students. With strong and continued demand from Malaysian students evident from the first intake, Nicholls was to be proved wrong as far as Murdoch University was concerned. At least some of Nicholls’ pessimism and opposition to the prospect of full-fee students is no doubt due to the clearly stated opposition to the concept by both of the bodies that she represented. She categorised the full-fee program as part of Dawkins’ aim to deregulate large sections of the economy and to significantly reduce the power of the unions, with the education unions being seen as “weak” and therefore good targets. Nicholls further asserted that the proposal was part of an ideological push by powerful elements in the Cabinet, including the Prime Minister, who were determined that the tertiary education sector should be made to pay its own way and become less reliant on the public purse. The outcomes of the trade mission’s recommendations were, therefore, she claimed, a foregone conclusion, with the enrolment of students to likely take place from as early as 1986.
The Goldring Report recommended that the major emphasis in regard to international student policy should be to continue to view it as part of Australia's aid programme:

*The objectives of Australia’s future policy on overseas students should be:*

- to contribute to the social and economic development of people and institutions in developing countries, and especially those in the Asian and Pacific region, by granting them access to Australia’s educational and training resources;
- to increase cultural exchange and to improve the quality of Australia’s educational and training resources; and
- to serve Australia’s interests by improving communication with and understanding of Australia.

The Goldring Committee recommended that the Overseas Student Charge should be continued so that students made some contribution towards their education, but with more generous levels of exemption from the Charge: “All other exemptions listed under the *Overseas Student Charge Act* be retained, except that the list should be streamlined to take account of some of the new, wider exemptions recommended by the Committee”. In addition to the exemptions, the Committee recommended that: “Institutions be provided with a modest scholarship fund to assist overseas students who can demonstrate financial hardship”.

The Committee stated its opposition to the concept of introducing a system in which international students would be expected to meet the full cost of the educational services that they received:

> Full-cost recovery, even within a regulated system, does not provide a sensible option for future policy. It would be politically unpopular overseas. Moreover, there must be serious doubts about the capacity of significant numbers of overseas students to pay full-cost.
Furthermore, the Committee stated, there were many benefits that flowed to Australia because of its subsidy of international students that could be lost in a purely commercial approach:

> Arguments in favour of full-cost tend to ignore the many factors such as foreign relations, trade, education and exchange interests which more than appear to justify the subsidy which the Australian community makes to the program. The consequences of imposing full-cost, even if accompanied by a scholarship scheme, would outweigh the goodwill and other positive benefits flowing to Australia from the program.

The Committee expressed particular concern about the dangers inherent in the negative responses that could be expected from the governments of Australia’s neighbours:

> The Committee had before it the experience of the introduction of full-cost fees in Britain in 1980 with the adverse political and economic repercussions that followed. The Australian OSC is already the cause of considerable resentment among overseas students and their families, some of whom regard the charge as a discriminatory measure by a wealthy, racist Australia... The Committee would not want to recommend any change which led to “Buy Australian last” campaigns in neighbouring countries.

As will be seen in later discussion in this study, the imposition of full fees for international students did lead to some recriminations on the part of the governments of neighbouring countries - especially from Malaysia! However, because those countries were unable to provide enough “at home” places for a large number of their students, the protests were not too strident and none of the feared trade resistance occurred.

Another of the benefits that was seen as being lost was the amount of associated revenue for the economy that resulted from the day-to-day expenditure of the international student body on items such as food, accommodation and transport. It seems hard to substantiate an argument based on such concerns, unless it was
predicated on the basis that the overall number of students would fall substantially as a result of the removal of subsidised places. In fact, the Committee predicted that this would be the case, citing as an example a statement from the Australian High commission in Fiji. The High Commission indicated that it believed that: “There would be an immediate drop of at least 40% in the numbers of tertiary students entering Australia from Fiji”. The huge increases in the enrolments of international students that followed the adoption of the policy to impose full fees showed this fear to be groundless.

It should be noted that even the Goldring Committee did not completely dismiss the concept of the sale of educational services. In Chapter Seven of its report, Mutual Advantage, the Committee stated: “As a long-term option for Australia, the marketing approach appears an attractive proposition. The Committee accepts that Australia has a comparative advantage in the area of educational resources and that this could be exploited”. In Chapter 12, the Committee discussed the various methods by which Australia might become involved in the marketing in the future. These included distance education, full-fee places in courses of particular need in overseas countries. Of particular interest for this study is the statement that: “Any proposal for a privately funded tertiary institution should receive serious consideration”.

Dunn (1992) said that he had found that the stance recommended by the Goldring Committee was the one preferred by both the education and the aid bureaucracies in Canberra and, he claimed, by Senator Ryan. In her autobiography, Ryan confirmed that this was her favoured option, saying that she had urged caution on her Cabinet colleagues about the adoption of policies based on the sale of education services.
Ryan expressed her disquiet about the imposition of tuition fees, even for international students, being convinced that any incoming export dollars would be subtracted from the amount that the Commonwealth Government allocated to higher education spending in its budget planning. In speaking to a group of Vice-Chancellors, she said: “Please remember that Finance wants to reduce outlays; they will welcome your earning export dollars but will subtract them from your public subsidy” (Ryan 1999).

Education For Sale

In her Ministerial Statement of March 22 1985, Ryan stated that the Government would adopt the Goldring approach, but it was apparent, even at that stage, that the free market pressures of the more politically influential proponents of full fees had already taken their toll on Ryan’s rather more conservative ideas:

_The Government acknowledges that there are likely to be students who wish to study in Australia, but who are not able to be accommodated within the quota of students to be subsidised by the Government. To provide increased opportunities for these students, institutions will be able to offer places at full cost in courses, separate from their normal degree and diploma courses, which are specifically designed for overseas students. A steering committee will also be established to recommend guidelines under which institutions may be permitted to offer places at full cost in normal degree courses. These places would be above and beyond those places subsidised by the Australian Government._

Senator Ryan's above statement and the legislation that followed opened a new era for the financing of Australian university education.

Of most direct interest for this study are the conditions set down for the offering of places in award courses in Commonwealth funded institutions such as universities (Ryan, 1986). It is clear from Ryan's announcement of these conditions that the government and its advisers were aware of many of the potential problems to be faced
by institutions in this new endeavour. In her statement (1986) she foreshadowed regulatory controls that would deal with these issues. One of the main conditions was that no Australian or subsidised international student should be displaced by fee-paying students. That is, this new category should be enrolled to fill unused places in existing courses or the students placed into extra courses provided in areas in which capacity existed or could be developed. Institutions were to ensure that the same academic standards applied to courses for this new category of students as applied to similar current courses. They were also to be responsible for the provision of any extra services that might be required to cater for the particular needs of the new "customers". This might include facilities such as English language upgrading, welfare support, counselling and even emergency financing.

In return for their assumption of these conditions, institutions were to be permitted to charge fees that would recover the full cost of providing courses and services, allowing for both recurrent and capital expenditure. With the exception of some monies to be returned to the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC) as a kind of retrospective rental for the use of existing capital works for such courses, institutions were to retain and manage the funds generated from international fee payers. This represented a major funding policy change from that applying to the previous disbursement of the Overseas Student Charge, which was absorbed into general government revenue. This policy shift represented a significant incentive for universities to become involved in the enrolment of full-fee paying international students. The stage was thus set for universities like Murdoch to consider their position in regard to this initiative.
CHAPTER THREE: THE MURDOCH UNIVERSITY CONTEXT

Before analysing and explaining the reaction and adaptation of Murdoch University to the full-fee student opportunity, it is essential to provide an understanding of the institution itself. When informed that Western Australia’s new university was to be named after him, Emeritus Professor Sir Walter Murdoch is said to have replied, “I hope it is a good university” (Western Australian Government 1970). In spite of a great deal of goodwill and hard work on the part of the Murdoch University Planning Board and the university’s foundation staff members, there were significant disadvantageous circumstances that for many years delayed progress towards Professor Murdoch’s requirement. Examination of its foundation and early history revealed a difficult environment that threatened the very survival of the university, placing it in a position that would eventually demand exploration of any possible means of expansion of student numbers and all potential sources of external financing. This included considerable interest in the creation of a program for full-fee paying international students at Murdoch. It will be argued that external pressures, combined with the philosophy and structures created by its Planning Board and the first Academic Council were to have a considerable bearing on the nature of the development of the university and the precarious position in which it found itself in 1985.

A New University

In the early 1960s significant pressures began to affect the provision of education in Australia at all levels. The "Baby Boomers" population explosion had already overstretched the secondary education sector with unprecedented numbers completing five years of high school education. This greatly increased number of students was about to begin seeking tertiary education. Western Australia had only one university, the University of Western Australia. There were several teachers’ colleges (later to become colleges of advanced education, but still largely devoted to teacher
education). The Western Australian Institute of Technology (WAIT) had strong courses in the commercial and technological fields in addition to its teacher training program.

In 1967, a committee chaired by Sir Lawrence Jackson reported that the University of Western Australia (UWA) would not be able to cope with the predicted large increase in student numbers and also retain its reputation for scholarship. The committee proposed that a new campus be formed to: "...protect the quality of the old" (Bolton 1985).

*The Committee was of the opinion that the maximum population of the University [UWA] should not exceed 8000 full time and 2000 part time students on its present campus. The estimated enrolments of the University reveal that by this criterion facilities need to be in operation on another site at the latest by 1975.*

(Western Australian Government 1967)

In particular, the UWA was hard-pressed to find space for new buildings. A new library and science laboratories were already under construction and plans were in place for further development of general lecture rooms and a mathematics building. There seemed to be no way to expand further without encroaching on the University’s playing fields or its beautiful gardens. The Jackson Committee recommended that the new institution should, in the first instance, be a university college, under the auspices of the UWA, catering for first and second year Arts and Science students, thus relieving the point of greatest pressure on the Crawley campus. The dilemma of Murdoch’s autonomy was to be one that recurred at intervals over the ensuing years.

In its submission to the Australian Universities Commission (AUC) for funding for the triennium 1970 - 72, the UWA included a request for $200 000 for the planning of a new university (AUC 1969). This request was approved by the AUC and included in its recommendations to the Commonwealth Government for the triennium (AUC
1969). Both the concept of a new university campus and the funding were approved by the Government (Commonwealth of Australia 1969). In the meantime, the Senate of the UWA invited its Professorial Board to set up a working party to consult with the Vice-Chancellor on the question of a university college (Bolton 1985). This body met at intervals throughout 1968 and early 1969 and came to the conclusion that the new institution should be autonomous from its inception rather than a college of the UWA (Bolton 1985). In a most significant decision, the Senate of UWA concurred with the working party and recommended to the Western Australian Government that the new institution should indeed be established as an autonomous university, and that an independent committee be formed to accomplish its formation (UWA 1969).

The Veterinary School
Further impetus for a new campus had been provided by the possibility of the State Government attracting a proposed new veterinary school to Perth. There was certainly no room for such a facility on the UWA campus at Crawley, though it would have complemented the well-established Faculty of Agriculture. However, the acquisition of such a prestigious professional school would certainly give a ‘flying start’ to a new university. The Senate of the UWA decided to delay the formation of the proposed planning committee for the new university until a decision on the location of the new veterinary school was made.

The AUC had asked Dr G. D. Farquhar of the CSIRO to investigate the need for a fourth veterinary school in Australia. The inquiry had been initiated largely because students from Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania had almost no access to the Veterinary Studies courses at the three existing veterinary schools (AUC 1969). Therefore, it was somewhat surprising that Farquhar recommended the establishment of the new veterinary school at the University of New England in Armidale, New South Wales. Regardless of the fact that some facilities were already available at that
site, and a perception by Farquhar that the UWA was already too busy with the establishment of a new medical school, Armidale was a long way from Perth and Adelaide! Commonwealth Education Minister Malcolm Fraser, in presenting the AUC report to the House of Representatives, said that no decision would be made about the location of the new veterinary school until there had been discussion with the interested states (Commonwealth of Australia 1969). The Brand Government in Western Australia must have lobbied hard and effectively because, eight months later, Commonwealth Minister Nigel Bowen announced that the Western Australian and Commonwealth Governments had agreed that the new veterinary school would be part of a second university to be established in Western Australia (The West Australian 1970a). There was still, however, a reluctance to grant full responsibility to the newcomer: “Mr Bowen said that it was anticipated that pre-clinical teaching of veterinary studies would, at the beginning, be provided at the UWA and that students would move to the new school in a later year of the course.” (The West Australian 1970a).

Expectations
Western Australian Premier David Brand and the Under Treasurer for Western Australia, Keith Townsing, believed it to be essential that the new university be given a name before planning commenced, so that its own clear identity would be established in the eyes of the Western Australian community. They decided that it should be named in honour of Sir Walter Murdoch, author, journalist, long-time Professor of English, and subsequent Chancellor, of the UWA (Townsing 1973). The Murdoch University Planning Board (MUPB) was established under the chairmanship of Professor Noel Bayliss of UWA and given official status by the passing of the Murdoch University Planning Board Act 1970 (Government of Western Australia 1970). From the outset there was an expectation that Murdoch University would be created in a somewhat different mould to existing universities. (While this was a
praiseworthy ideal, it will be shown that its realisation would lead to an unfortunate perception in the Western Australian community that Murdoch was somehow not quite a “real” university.) Commenting on the allocation of the Veterinary Studies school to Murdoch, Premier Brand said: “It also presents us with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to give the proposed second university a character of its own” (The West Australian 1970b). Further, in his second reading speech on the Bill to establish the Murdoch University Planning Board, Brand said, “I too would like to see a new look to the university”, and “I trust that when Murdoch University is fully established it will prove to be one of the outstanding universities of Australia” (Government of Western Australia 1970). The remarks of other speakers in the debate further illustrate the existence of an expectation that Murdoch University would be significantly different to other Australian universities. Alexander Taylor, Member for Cockburn said that the university: “Should cater for new topics or a new orientation of older topics so that they are socially relevant to the age in which we live”, a position that would be taken up later by the Planning Board. Taylor’s speech also reflected the high expectations that were being placed on the fledgling university: “The new university should be able to function even more successfully than the existing university and I hope that it will be able to make an even greater contribution to the welfare of the State” (Government of Western Australian 1970). This view was also supported by Ronald Davies, the member for Victoria Park: “My one plea is that the board should try to make this a distinctly Australian university by perhaps abandoning some of the older traditions which do not appear to mean very much these days” (Government of Western Australian 1970). The only sour notes in the debate were sounded by Members Donald May and Colin Jamieson who complained of a lack of representation of students and non-academics on the Planning Board. This issue of participation in decision-making would raise its head again when the university was finally operating.
Location
The working party set up by the Professorial Board of UWA in 1968 selected a site for the new campus in Bateman, a suburb in Perth's southern area, part of which would eventually take on the name of Murdoch. This working party rejected proposals for the new institution to be established in areas with better transport, more concentrated populations and other amenities, such as Fremantle or the inner city suburb of North Perth (Bolton 1985). Information about the problems experienced by other new Australian universities like Monash and Flinders, because of their similar relative isolation, must have been available to the working party, but they do not seem to have deemed these factors of sufficient import to change their recommendation. This placement of the University was to be a significant cause of the lack of growth experienced in its early years and was still of considerable concern to the Birt Committee in 1979:

At present, Murdoch University relies heavily on the South-West and South-East Metropolitan Statistical Sub-Divisions for its students. While it is likely that there will be significant population growth in these two sub-divisions over the next twenty years, substantial population growth will also take place in the North Metropolitan Statistical Sub-Division which, at present provides relatively few of Murdoch's students.

In the summary of its findings, the Committee concluded that the population growth in the southern areas of Perth would occur only after even greater growth in the Northern suburbs (Government of Western Australia 1979). Bolton (1985) said that the Planning Board in 1973 had adopted "incredibly optimistic" projections for the size of the student body when it predicted that the campus might grow to ten thousand by 1985. The reality was far from this, because several of the assumptions made by the planners proved to be of doubtful validity. The southward expansion of the Perth suburban area was much slower than forward planners had indicated. Furthermore, most of the families that did move into the southern suburbs were of a lower socio-
economic level than that which traditionally had served as a base for university populations. For six years in the 1980s, I was Deputy Principal at North Lake Senior High School, the nearest high school to Murdoch University. Much of the new growth in the school population came from the lower socio-economic areas. The families that lived in the suburbs to the west and south of Murdoch, in particular, would typically have had no member who had ever been to a university to act as a role model for students completing secondary education. Even by the middle 1980's, there was no tradition, among students and their families, of an expectation of participation in university education after the completion of their schooling. Newer, more affluent suburbs developed to the east and north of the Murdoch University campus, but many students from these areas rejected Murdoch in favour of the more traditional and prestigious UWA, or the more practically career-oriented WAIT (later to become the Curtin University of Technology).

The Planning Board
The Murdoch University Planning Board (MUPB) was set up in July 1970 under the chairmanship of Professor Noel Bayliss of the UWA. Five other staff members from the UWA, three senior public servants, a barrister, a businessman, a school principal and foundation Registrar Dan Dunn joined him in the task of setting up the framework for a new university. The structure of this group would suggest that the new institution would be planned in the conventional, conservative mould and, most likely become a clone of the UWA. That this did not occur says much about the seriousness with which the MUPB approached the task and the intellectual honesty with which they explored new possibilities. The Board’s early tasks included the development of the university buildings, the framework for its academic courses, management of the university and the appointment of staff (Murdoch University Planning Board 1970).
Planning was barely under way when the Board received the news from the AUC that budgetary restraints might delay the opening of the university for one year and the Veterinary School for up to three (MUPB 1971a). This was followed by a suggestion from the AUC that anticipated initial enrolment numbers for Murdoch University be downgraded from 600 to 450, because the AUC statistics showed a probable drop in demand for First Year places in 1975. For Murdoch to take 600 students might have a significant effect on the numbers enrolling at the UWA (MUPB 1971b). In spite of this gloomy outlook, the Planning Board decided to proceed with planning for at least 525 students in 1975 (MUPB 1971c). In the staffing area, the MUPB decided to offer the post of Vice-Chancellor to Professor Steven Griew of the University of Dundee, and he accepted the appointment to take up the position as from August 1972. The Board also selected the University’s first Librarian. However, continuing uncertainty about the University’s financial situation delayed the advertising of the foundation chairs for some time (Murdoch University Planning Board 1971e). Finally, after prolonged negotiations between the Planning Board, the AUC and the State and Commonwealth Governments, the Board received assurance that there would be sufficient funding provided to enable both the University and the Veterinary School to be established and to commence operations according to the original timetable (MUPB 1972a). Murdoch University was at last a reality, but on a shoestring budget and totally dependent for on-going funding on the Commonwealth Government. As has been shown in an earlier chapter, the real value of the funding from this source declined significantly during the first ten years of Murdoch’s existence, creating an urgent need for the University’s staff to seek out alternative sources.

Deciding To Be Different

The MUPB was aware that:

*The experience of new universities in other States had been that students tended to ‘play safe’ and give preference to the established institutions and courses which appeared to be ‘acceptable’ from the point of view of the community.*

(MUPB 1972b)
As early as March 1971, however, the Academic Committee of the Planning Board had suggested that the first formative years of all undergraduate courses within the University should be controlled by a Board of General Studies rather than the Schools of Study. This Board would offer, it was proposed, the chance for all students to:

*Broaden their horizons, but without sacrificing rigour in concern for obligatory general education for all and the protection of students from the excessive demands of the professional and disciplinary schools which were frequently expressed in the prescription of pre-requisites which took up the whole of the student’s course.* (MUPB 1971f)

At the end of its deliberations, the Planning Board recommended that a Board of Part 1 Studies be established to control the First Year experiences of all undergraduates and it also expressed strong views that study at the new university should have an interdisciplinary structure. There was an expression of a belief that the academic organisation and decision-making structures of the university should be open and participative:

*There was a strong desire that the academic organisation should not be of the conventional faculty/department structure. It was suggested that the only way that such an organisation could be implemented would be to break down the conventional method of representation through academic committees to the academic council. Council membership should be by direct vote and not related to any particular school organisation.* (MUPB 1972b)

In July 1973 the act to establish Murdoch University was proclaimed and the MUPB was replaced by the University Senate. Though the Senate would have the final say, it was effectively up to the incoming Vice-Chancellor and his foundation professors to take up the task of establishing the realities of the University.

The Murdoch Ethos

At Dunn’s suggestion, Griew called a meeting of the founding group, which included himself, the ten Foundation Professors, the Librarian and the Secretary (Dunn) at the
Contacio Hotel in Scarborough from the 10th to the 12th of July 1973. During those three days, this group was to make many of the crucial decisions that would determine the nature and direction of the new university. The consequences of many of those decisions were responsible for the progress (or more often the lack of it!) of the University in its developmental years from 1975 to 1985.

High on the agenda for the Contacio meeting was the definition of an ethos that would form the philosophical basis for the planning of the academic and administrative directions of Murdoch University. Griew had already made some of his own views on these matters quite clear. On a visit to Perth in September 1971, he said that there was no excuse for a new university to make the same mistakes as the older universities, which had been handicapped by tradition. He suggested that he would be supportive of less specialisation in students’ studies and an approach in which courses responded to the social context of the University and its students. Griew had also predicted that all members of the university, including students, would have a say in its administration (Griew 1971). He restated these views in an address that he gave shortly after taking up his position as Vice-Chancellor:

*For a start I do not expect it to rely solely upon the advice and opinion from within the ranks of its own academic staff. It will be responsive as well to the views of its students and to the community it serves. I hope, among other things, that Murdoch, in its absolutely proper concern that its students should achieve high standards in all they do, will allow for a great deal of variability in students’ methods of achieving these standards.*

(Griew 1973)

At the Contacio meeting, each of the foundation professors and the librarian submitted a paper setting out his views about suitable goals for Murdoch University. These papers revealed a wide range of beliefs about both academic and administrative matters. The whole of the foundation group expressed a desire for at least some level of difference in approach that would distinguish Murdoch from other universities, but
the extent of such variation was subject to great differences of opinion. Some members of the group favoured courses that would be interdisciplinary and cross-cultural, socially relevant (to the extent of developing very unorthodox courses in popular culture) and even student-designed (Buick 1973, Frodsham 1973, Raser 1973). This group agreed, with the support of Hill and Mainsbridge, that emphasis must be placed on teaching and learning rather than allowing the dominance of research that occurred at most universities (Hill 1973, Mainsbridge 1973). There were, however, those who espoused a far more traditional approach: “Murdoch must accept as the central theme of its philosophy, the traditional responsibility of all universities - acquisition, critical evaluation, storage and dispersal of knowledge” (Loneragan 1973). In a similar vein, Bolton wrote of a need for: “The transmission and improvement of some of the crafts of human civilisation” (Bolton 1973). Parker, spokesman for those of the group who saw research as the key to the establishment of the reputation of the University wrote:

Our graduates must have a chance of entering the career of their choice. We are failing them if they wish to become chemists but find after three years that their exciting interdisciplinary degree, with Chemistry major, is not recognised by the Royal Australian Chemical Institute. (Parker 1973)

In the matter of academic administration there was also a dichotomy of views. The MUPB had expressed a hope that the University’s management structure would not develop into a bureaucracy. Griew and several of the foundation professors supported this view to the extent of calling for participation of all members of the Murdoch community in the decision-making process: “I am thinking rather of making our students full partners in the month-to-month operation of the institution” (Raser 1973a). The more conservative members of the group held contrary views: “I favour God Chairmen, Deans etc. I like a minimum number of committees with a lot of power in the hands of few people.” (Parker 1973).
From the participants’ statements and subsequent discussion, a consensus was achieved, though no formal statement of the ethos was presented as an outcome of the Contacio meeting (Foundation Group 1973). It was left to Griew to make public the philosophical basis that had been selected for the planning process at Murdoch University. He described it as:

- *A willingness to try fresh approaches in tertiary education.*
- *A commitment to make university education available to all people with the ability and inclination, regardless of age or where they live. Thus we set out to attract the mature age student.*
- *Our ethos has also involved a re-examination of the purposes of a university education. While it is the task of a university to provide its students with employable skills, it is also our responsibility to provide them with a liberal education. This calls for the development of a breadth of understanding an informed sensitivity to social questions, a capacity for analytical thought and, by no means unimportant, a sense of intellectual humility.*
- *Learning will be facilitated in a personal environment. We will be emphasising small-group work, and other forms of teaching and assessment which enable a close interaction between staff and individual students.*
- *Curriculum relevant to students and society.*
- *Commitment to an interdisciplinary approach.*
- *A commitment to develop close ties with the community.*

In neither the Contacio papers nor subsequent public statements were there any considerations of the consequences of adopting this ethos or of the means of achieving its principles. According to Bolton (1985): “It was a fine thing to launch Murdoch with a statement of ideals, but a good deal of subsequent trouble would have been avoided if their implications had been spelt out more clearly”.

Courses
The nature and structure of the courses offered to undergraduate students, on the basis of the principles espoused by the Murdoch Ethos, was to prove problematic for the growth of the University. Final year school students and their teacher advisers were accustomed to the traditional structure in which students studied four units at First Year level, each of them usually a pre-requisite for units in later years. Murdoch’s
requirement was for all students to study a Trunk Course, which represented one quarter of their Part 1 studies, along with other units, not necessarily pre-requisite for Part 2 courses. Entry requirements were to be “flexible” so that students who did not qualify for admission through the traditional mechanism of selection as a result of external examinations might still be given a chance to enrol. These structures, along with some unusually named courses such as Peace and Conflict Studies, Human Development, and Communication Studies caused a high level of concern for students and were the reason why many of them chose not to apply for entry to Murdoch University. During my own time as an administrator at North Lake Senior High School, the courses, course structures and entrance requirements were viewed with some suspicion by students and teachers at all of the local secondary schools. This problem was eventually recognised within the University. Writing of the early period, Bolton (1985) said: “Some of the local high schools falling within Murdoch’s catchment were dubious or even antagonistic about the academic philosophy of the new university”. The situation had not really improved by 1979, when a committee of inquiry chaired by Emeritus Professor L. M. Birt reported:

*It has been suggested to the committee that Murdoch University’s apparent limited attractiveness to undergraduate students, especially school-leavers, has resulted, in part, from its public image. A number of submissions has put the view that the University has created the impression that it is quite different from other universities, particularly the University of Western Australia, and that many employers, parents and upper school students believe that the University’s courses are not a particularly good preparation for employment.*

(Government of Western Australia 1979)

The poor reputation of Murdoch University within its local community was compounded by the behaviour of some of the earliest teacher education students during their practical school experiences. Schools expected trainee teachers to conform to the quite conservative dress and behaviour standards of the time. The somewhat egalitarian atmosphere at Murdoch seemed to have encouraged a far less
formal approach to such matters so that student teachers arrived at schools in casual
dress - even bare-footed! Many of them upset their supervising teachers with an
attitude that led them to make such statements as, “Your methods are old-fashioned”,
and, “I know as much as you about this”. (An attitude described by one of my
colleagues as “downright Bolshie”). To make matters even worse, the Murdoch
trainees encouraged the school students to use their first names rather than the
conformist Mr, Miss etc. Many schools refused to offer training places to Murdoch
students and also advised their school-leavers to enrol elsewhere. This poor public
image continued to affect the University right up to the time at which decisions about
full-fee international students were being made. The Murdoch University
Administrative Review Panel (1987) found that:

Almost universally, from the Vice-Chancellor as principal academic and
administrator down, academic and administrative staff expressed serious
concern at what they perceive to be the University’s low profile and poor
image within the West Australian community.

Administration
In many ways, the administrative structures that resulted from the deliberations at the
early planning sessions mirrored those of existing institutions. There was to be a
supreme decision-making body called the Senate made up of a mixture of elected and
appointed members in a balance prescribed by the Murdoch University Act. This
body would consider some business generated from its own initiative and would also
respond to the recommendations of the far more representative Academic Council.
The requirement for the Academic Council was also prescribed by the Act, but the
composition of its membership was to be defined by the University community. This
body was designed to represent all facets of the institution's educational programs, and
the membership balance that evolved ensured that this was the case. The Schools of
Study were also required meet in council to inform their representatives' stance at
meetings of Academic Council. This appeared to form a pyramidal chain-of-
command structure for Murdoch, but that was by no means the complete picture. The system that eventuated had the flexibility to form sub-groups and working parties that reported to and were responsible directly to the Vice-Chancellor. Griew quickly established two such consultative bodies, the Committee of Deans and a Resources Allocation Committee made up of personally selected academics. This aspect of the administrative structure will be seen later to be of great importance to the development of the full-fee paying international student initiative at Murdoch, during which a significant degree of decision-making appears to have taken place outside of the University’s formal structures. In the earliest days, however, the plethora of consultative and decision-making groups that evolved was seen by some observers like Bolton to be untenable:

Thus within its first year of operations Murdoch saddled itself with a fragmented and piecemeal administrative [system] partly giving lip service to the participatory ethos, partly enabling the Vice-Chancellor to take ad hoc advice from whatever source suited the needs of the moment, and in few respects affording a clear allocation of responsibility enabling decisions at any level to be taken confidently and conclusively. (Bolton 1985)

However, a significant number of members of the Murdoch community held contrary view to this. Griew had built an expectation that the administrative style would be participatory and democratic. He had also expressed the hope that: “Staff and students will mix much more as equals than is usual at universities” (Griew 1975b). This message was espoused by many of the foundation staff and an atmosphere of egalitarianism grew on campus, with many of the staff and students believing themselves to be equal partners in the running of the university. Some of the initial practices encouraged this view. Professors, for example, were given equal teaching loads to other staff and expected to teach classes in Part 1 subjects (Griew 1975c). There were no regulations restricting such things as the posting of notices, access to the campus or the movement or parking of vehicles. There was, therefore, a great outcry when the Senate adopted campus by-laws requiring such impositions as
“obedience to all authorised signs”, including those granting privileged parking to senior members of staff (Griew 1975c). Griew explained that the lack of definitions on campus had led to potential legal problems and the need for by-laws. He also acknowledged that there would be times when final decisions about the administration of the University would have to be made by the Vice-Chancellor or Senate, and that the University had to comply with certain external expectations from such bodies as governments and the AUC. The founders’ concept of equal participation in university governance was already appearing to be illusory.

It is clear that significant movement towards the centralising of decision-making occurred even during Griew’s term of office. A meeting of 400 Murdoch staff and students on October 20, 1976, expressed its concerns about this centralisation. It was resolved that the meeting:

Call upon all members of the University, especially those in positions of authority to rededicate themselves and where necessary to re-orient themselves towards the original innovative goals on which the University was founded.

This meeting affirms the proposition that there should ideally be proportional representation of all members of the University on all committees and boards including Senate, Academic Council, selection committees and Part 1 and Part 2 Boards of Study. (Murdoch Community Forum 1976)

Arthur Beacham, who assumed the role of Acting Vice-Chancellor after Griew’s resignation in 1977, regarded Murdoch’s administrative style as ineffective and he “Displayed his lack of patience with the consultative approach to decision-making” (Aplin 1984). To the dismay of the democrats on campus, Beacham concentrated the administrative responsibility into the hands of senior staff members: “Arthur Beacham played a crucial role at Murdoch University. Arthur more than any other single person changed Murdoch from being a place which saw itself as interesting and different to a place that justified itself in terms of tradition” (Anderson 1990). The new Vice-Chancellor, Glenn Willson, continued the process begun by Beacham, so
that by 1984 the consultative process was seen as having been completely replaced by: “The hierarchical decision-making process that is inherent in traditional structures” (Aplin 1984). Aplin, who was President of the Murdoch University Guild of Students at the time, was particularly concerned about the very small number of places available to students on the University’s decision-making committees.

Student activist Sean Hawkes also criticised the opposition of Willson to student participation in decision-making. In an article in METIOR, Hawkes said that the student body was in danger of losing any influence at all. He expressed the hope that the new Vice-Chancellor (Boyce) might show a more liberal attitude so that: “We may continue Murdoch’s credible record of students representation” (Hawkes 1985). In another edition of METIOR, the contemporary Guild President wrote: “During the time that I have been involved in student matters I have become acutely aware of the all too often disregard for student opinion”. She described the attitude of staff members towards the opinions of students as: “Patronising tokenism” (Carlton-Doney 1985). In spite of this pessimism, a tradition of expecting to be consulted persisted at Murdoch and was strongly expressed during the debate on Murdoch’s proposed participation in programs for full-fee international students.

Peter Boyce, who assumed the position of Vice-Chancellor in late 1984, on the eve of momentous changes in Australian tertiary education, expressed his impatience with the concept participatory democracy on campus:

Chief executives of Australian universities are these days in an unenviable predicament because they are expected to take painful decisions on issues of growth or economics in a non-hierarchical, decentralised assortment of academic dukedoms, in each of which sluggish bouts of consultation and cross-referencing among representative committees are meant to occur with eventual outcomes often reflecting the lowest common denominator.

(Boyce 1985)
As one of his first acts as Vice-Chancellor, Boyce established a committee to review the administrative structures within the university. This Review Panel was chaired by Professor Jack Loneragan one of the more conservative of the foundation professors (Loneragan 1973). The findings of the Panel were in many ways similar to those that I have seen in reviews of other institutions with which I have been familiar:

- Staff members were overloaded, leading to a lowering of morale.
- Senior decision-makers were too involved in day-to-day administrivia to have sufficient time for reflection and policy initiation. There was, therefore, a need to devolve some of the day-to-day decision-making to Schools and Service Units.
- There was a need for better communication within the University.
- There was a need to properly define roles, responsibilities and accountabilities within the system.

The proposed solutions and their implementation strengthened the hierarchical administrative structures that had been developing and further consolidated responsibility for policy formulation and resource allocation in the hands of the Senior Executive Group (Murdoch University 1987).

One of the guiding principles stated by the Review Panel was associated with an ability to respond quickly to take advantage of opportunities: “In the present political and economic environment, the University needs administrative structures and procedures which can respond rapidly to requests from governmental bodies and the opportunities presented to it”. This perceived need led to the establishment of a Senior Executive Group that consisted of the Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, The two Pro Vice-Chancellors, of Research and of Academic Affairs (two new positions), the Registrar and the Business Manager. (These last two were also new positions that would replace the position of Secretary on Dunne’s retirement. In the meanwhile, he became the Registrar, with responsibility for many of the academic
and service functions of the University, including the Overseas Office.) This Senior Executive was given the major responsibility for setting the future direction of the University:

(They will have particular responsibility for acting in support of the chief executive functions, for furthering the internal and external community relations interests of the University, for the coordinating and generally superintending the executive work of the University, and regularly reviewing the policies and administrative systems of the University. While this group’s principal function is executive management, it also has responsibility for matters of major administration policy. (Murdoch University 1987)

In a further move designed to streamline and centralise the decision-making processes of the University, and remove the “sluggish bout of consultation, of which Boyce had complained, the panel recommended that:

The Senior Executive Group initiate and coordinate a review of all committees and their operations with a view to:
(a) phasing out committees which are considered unnecessary;
(b) remove executive work from committees and locate it with the appropriate action officers;
(c) streamlining the operations of committees.

This had the effect of considerably reducing the level of real participation of many staff and students in decision-making at Murdoch University.

Another crucial change, of great relevance to the future development of the full-fee paying international students program, was that made to the role of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor:

In response to the widespread concern about the overload being carried by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the need for him to assist in promoting the University’s entrepreneurial activities, the Panel considered it essential to relieve him of direct line responsibility for Finance and Property matters.

The incumbent Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Nairn, was thus freed from a great deal of “administrivia” and able to play an important role in the planning of the University’s
entrepreneurial activities, including those concerned with full-fee paying international students.

The entrepreneurial talents of the planners at Murdoch in regard to the provision of accommodation are nicely illustrated in the negotiations that they undertook with Consorzio Italia. The resulting partnership procured for the university significant additions to its stock of on-campus student accommodation.

In 1983 an Australian yachting syndicate, with the financial backing of Perth businessman Alan Bond, won the Americas Cup, a yachting trophy that had been held continuously by the United States since the inception of races for it in 1851. Bond and his consortium had mounted two of his three challenges, in 1974 and 1980 from his marina at Yanchep Sun City, some fifty kilometres North of Perth. Bond had anticipated that the defence of the trophy would be centred around the facilities at Yanchep. The area, however, lacked the desired levels of infrastructure in matters such as accommodation and docking/slipping facilities for such a large international undertaking, so the port of Fremantle was selected as the base for both the series of races to select the yacht to challenge Australia and the actual Defence Series. (Lacking the impetus to development represented by the holding of the races, Bond sold his Yanchep interests to Tokyu, a Japanese consortium. The significance of this change of ownership for Murdoch University is discussed elsewhere in this study.)

Syndicates from several countries entered the Challenger series from which the eventual opponent for the Australian boat would be chosen. All of these national groups required accommodation for their teams of yachtsmen and other support
personnel in or near to the Fremantle area. Deputy Vice-Chancellor Mal Nairn said that the University had approached the Western Australian State Government with a proposal for it to provide funding to allow additional housing to be built on a similar arrangement to that negotiated in 1982 between Griffith University and the organisers of the Commonwealth games in Brisbane. The State Government, however, could not provide funds and suggested that Murdoch might have more success in direct negotiation with a challenge syndicate. The Americas Cup Defence Office was responsible for sourcing suitable accommodation and viewed the Murdoch University Student House as “highly satisfactory” (Murdoch University 1984a). The Murdoch University Property Committee placed a proposal before the Senate in October 1984 to lease one of the sixteen-bed blocks in Student House to an Americas Cup challenge syndicate. Under the proposal the money earned from the lease of the rooms would be used to construct a new sixteen-bed block at the University. According to the Property Committee, the revenue gained from leasing the block for approximately five months in 1985/86 and for up to eight months in 1986/87 would be sufficient to cover the total capital cost of the extension. The Senate approved the proposal, subject to the approval of the Finance and Staffing Committee, having been assured that no students would have to give up their accommodation, other than moving to an adjacent block. Though Senate minutes do not record debate, the Murdoch News of October 1984 records that some concern was expressed by the two student representatives on the Senate. There is, however, no record of these concerns being followed up by the Student Guild at that stage.

In a second, far-sighted move, the Senate also resolved to accept a recommendation that funds be provided to bring forward the planned construction of a function centre
as part of a Student ‘Village’ complex, with costs to be met by opportunistic savings recouped from a current construction contract and a small loan. The function centre would not only service the yachting syndicate, but also enhance the attractiveness the complex as a conference venue with the potential for earning significant future funds for the university. The Director of Student Village offered another example of this type of business acumen displayed by the planners at Murdoch University, and particularly by the Property Committee. In preparing the site for a new accommodation block, the Property Committee had obtained approval to put in place the site-works, drainage, plumbing and sewerage needed for a further stage to be constructed within the following eighteen months (Cook 1993). The savings to the project of using the contractors while they were on site, represented, Cook said, as much as fifty per-cent for those installations.

It is worth noting that the decision-making mechanism demonstrated here is similar to other instances found in the course of this study. A powerful committee of the University brought a proposal that was already under negotiation with the Americas Cup Defence Office directly to the Senate and was granted approval subject to the go-ahead from another significant committee. There is no mention of any role to be played by the other representative bodies on campus; Academic Council minutes of February 1985 simply record the decision. Effectively, the slower, consultative processes, much vaunted in the early Murdoch literature and thoroughly disliked by Vice-Chancellors such as Beacham and Boyce (see discussion elsewhere), had been sidestepped. One of the ramifications of this aspect of the decision-making process is revealed in the minutes of the Senate meeting of November 1984 (Murdoch University 1984b). Whereas the October meeting had been happy to endorse the
proposals before it and accepted that there would be no dislocation of students, the
November meeting notes that:

*It was expected that accommodation would be required for some forty to forty-five persons from late September to early March. This would mean an overlap at both ends of the academic year with the possibility of serious disruption to students’ lives prior to end-of-year examinations.*

It appears on this occasion, and on others cited in this study, that the complete ramifications of decisions were either not clearly outlined for the Senate or not well understood by members. Dunn (1993) said that a lot of the research for the presentation of proposals was carried out by members of the Property Committee or directly by the Vice-Chancellor or his deputies. In this case, it appears that more information had come into the hands of other members of the Senate who then questioned the decisions that they had made previously. While it is not possible to positively identify the source of the new data, or concerns expressed about the disruption of student lives, it seems safe to assume the student representatives on the Senate had been approached by students or other parties with an interest in Student Village affairs. By February, as a result of further negotiations, the possibility of resident disruption seems to have evaporated and the Senate resolved to approve the formalisation of an agreement with the Americas Cup Defence Office and Consorzio Italia. The Italians then occupied the accommodation as agreed for Semester 2.

No further disquiet about the proposal was expressed on campus until after the first occupation had occurred and the second phase was imminent. In early 1986 an anonymous writer to the student newspaper *Metior* claimed that students had not been given any information and had only found out about the plan for the Italians to use student accommodation in a local newspaper. The writer went on to assert that, “Students who will be required to move out of Student House in second semester will
be placed in an impossible situation”. This assertion of a lack of information is rather at odds with the facts: that the student Senate representatives had raised the matter in October 1984 and that the project had been reported in the *Murdoch News* in the same month and again in July 1985 (Bryce 1985). Certainly, the student Guild was aware of the situation, The President reported to the March Secretariat meeting that: “Up to 45 rooms will be taken up by the Consorzio Italia Syndicate, leaving that many students homeless in semester 2”. He went on to accuse the ‘University” of not caring for its students: “The University position was reiterated, they do not perceive that they have any special obligation to those students being dislodged from Student House in 2nd Semester” (Murdoch University Guild of Students 1986a). This concern was followed up, gaining the concession that preference for the remaining beds at Student House would be given to First Year country students (Murdoch University Guild of Students 1986c). The Vice-Chancellor reported to the Senate in July 1986 that the students who had been unable to continue in residence after first semester all appeared to have been able to make satisfactory arrangements. The continued concerns of the Guild indicate that this had been at the cost of considerable inconvenience for some students: “The CIS will be resuming from 26 July. I expect that students will soon be starting to feel the housing pinch” (Murdoch University Guild of Students 1986b).

Due in large part to the influence of the Property committee, the Finance and Staffing Committee and members of the Murdoch administration, the members of *Consorzio Italia* were able to occupy the accommodation during the second semesters of 1985 and 1986, though with some disruption to the student residents. This short-term disadvantage to some students was seen as “acceptable” because of the longer-term advantages that had been gained (Murdoch University 1986a). With very little
expenditure of its own funds the University gained one complete sixteen-bedroom accommodation block and a conference centre. A ‘fairy tale’ ending to the incident would have involved a successful defence of the Cup by Australia so that the syndicates would have returned to Fremantle in 1990 with the possibility of further contribution to the Murdoch finances. This was not to be, however, with the USA regaining the trophy.

The Fight For Existence
There is no doubt that: “The initial planning for Murdoch University was based on rather optimistic assumptions about growth” (Government of Western Australia 1979). The continued strong growth in demand for university places into the middle of the 1970s, predicted by the Jackson Committee, did not eventuate. Population growth in the Murdoch University catchment area was much slower than anticipated. Predictions of sustained economic growth for Australia which, it was proposed, would generate increased demand for university graduates, foundered in the face of the worldwide economic downturn of the 1970s. The effect of these unfulfilled expectations was further exacerbated by an increased demand for the more narrowly career-oriented types of courses offered by Murdoch’s nearest, and much larger, competitor, WAIT.

Murdoch University opened in February 1975 with 684 undergraduate students. Of great significance was the fact that more than fifty percent of those students were over the age of twenty-three years; as opposed to the national average of about thirty percent (Government of Western Australia 1979). This mature-age bias certainly gave the staff the opportunity to practise the “students and teaching first” philosophy espoused by its planners, because the flexible entry policy had led to the admission of a large number of students without the standard tertiary entrance requirements. The low proportion of high ability school-leavers in the mix did not bode well for either
the University’s continued growth or for the development of high quality postgraduate programs. This problem continued to concern the University’s policy makers for many years. After seeing the enrolments for 1976, the Senate called for a report from the Vice-Chancellor:

*The report stated that there was a good deal of concern that the university was not achieving an entirely satisfactory balance in its undergraduate population between school leavers and non school leavers. There was accordingly cause for concern in the fall off between 1975 and 1976 in first preference applications by school leavers.*

(Murdoch University 1976a)

The situation had improved only slightly by 1979: “At undergraduate level it appeared that first admissions would not be up to expected level, although there was an increase both actually and proportionately in school leaver numbers” (Murdoch University 1979). Postgraduate numbers also grew slowly, restricted by the financial constraints placed on the university by the AUC’s lack of funds:

*These numbers [of postgraduate places] represented a slight increase on the 1978 total but represented virtually no real growth, as the increase would be almost entirely taken up by the flow-on from enrolments in earlier years. It was stated that the implication of these figures was that there would be no prospect of increasing the staff establishment and that expenditure would have to continue to be carefully scrutinized.*

(Murdoch University 1978)

Murdoch was by no means alone in its problems with finance, because all Australian universities were, similarly, almost wholly dependent on Commonwealth grants for recurrent and capital expenditure (Commonwealth of Australia 1979). Some of the more established universities would have been able to utilise their accumulated funds to offer places beyond those funded under the guidelines of the AUC and its successor the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC), but this road was not open to Murdoch University. Murdoch’s situation was exacerbated by regular press reports that cast a shadow over Murdoch’s future viability. The sense of impermanence engendered by these articles would have done nothing to encourage prospective students. In August 1975, after the Commonwealth budget statement,
Griew was reported as saying that the budget had created difficulties for the University in planning for the future (The West Australian 1975a). A letter to The West Australian (1975b) from thirty-three members of the Murdoch staff, protesting about cuts to the research funding and thus to university staffing, brought a stinging public response from the Commonwealth Minister for Education, Kim Beazley (Senior):

*If there are no proposals of quality, there should be no grants. The research grants committee does not exist to give academics something to do but to give researchers who have intelligent proposals the necessary funds for research. This attitude is an example of the Marie Antoinette syndrome that, “Whoever takes a cut, it should not be us.”* (The West Australian 1975b)

Griew reported to the Murdoch Senate in May 1976 that new funding arrangements would:

- Reduce the number of postgraduate awards by eleven percent from 1976 to 1977.
- Require all universities to maintain their intake over the next three years at the 1976 level.
- Defer all but essential construction and maintenance.
- Represent a two percent increase in real terms on the funding for 1976.

Griew pointed out that this small increase would do little more than cover increases due to inflation (Murdoch 1976b). The local press reported:

*Murdoch University is in financial trouble. An academic committee is investigating at least five major study programmes which may have to be closed or wound down. Yesterday the chairman of the board of part two studies at Murdoch, Professor Geoffrey Bolton, told a meeting of almost 100 communications students that their course was in jeopardy. “The course is on the line and is being considered very carefully”, he said, “But so are five or six other areas of study”* (The West Australian 1976a).

In his book, Bolton (1985) claimed that the press had made a mistake and Griew, in fact, issued a denial on the next day (The West Australian1976b). However, the
damage had been done and prospective (and even current) students must have had
grave doubts about Murdoch University as a viable place at which to enrol. Financial
pressure, public questioning of the viability of the university and slow growth
continued throughout the next two years so that by 1978 the full time equivalent
enrolment had grown to only 1608, with an even lower figure of 1578 projected for
1979 (Government of Western Australia 1979).

The Williams Report
In 1978 the Commonwealth Government created the Committee of Inquiry into
Education and Training, to be chaired by Professor B. R. Williams, Vice-Chancellor
of the University of Sydney. The committee was given broad terms of reference
enabling it to examine all aspects of Australian education. In February 1979 the
Murdoch University community and the general public of Western Australia were
shocked by the Committee’s statement: “We have come to the conclusion that
Murdoch University does not have a promising future as an independent institution
and suggest that its activities should be integrated with those of the University of
Western Australia” (Commonwealth of Australia 1979). The Inquiry had revealed
that, because of its small enrolment and the high funding requirements of the
Veterinary School, Murdoch University had the highest operating grant per student of
all Australian universities: being $5394 compared with a low of $2755 at Macquarie
and $3457 at the UWA. The report set the minimum economic size for Murdoch at
approximately 4500 FTE students. The Committee found that, even if all of the
projected additional university students in Western Australia enrolled at Murdoch, its
maximum enrolment, under the most favourable growth predictions for the sector,
would be approximately 2600 by 1986.

Both the Court Government and the ALP Opposition sprang to the defence of
Murdoch’s independence:
The State Government in Western Australia would not have a bar of any amalgamation or merger of Murdoch University and the UWA, the Premier, Sir Charles Court, said yesterday. Referring to the Williams report recommendation that Murdoch should be integrated with the UWA Sir Charles said, “We have fought hard to get Murdoch. We will fight hard to maintain it”. The opposition spokesman on education matters, Mr R. Hetherington, said that the Committee recommendation was not soundly based. (The West Australian 1979a)

Even the usually at best ambivalent local press saw reason for an independent Murdoch:

There may be areas in which Murdoch could pull up its socks in things like course design to improve enrolments. Perhaps it has need also to give potential students - especially in the mature-aged and external groups - a better idea of what it has to offer. However, the major reason for persevering with Murdoch is to ensure that West Australians have the choice of a less formal institution than the one at Crawley. (The West Australian 1979b)

The Court Government set up its own committee, under the chairmanship of Professor L. M. Birt, to report on the future of Murdoch University. The committee suggested that Murdoch required some stimulatory or strategic assistance to enable it to grow in line with the large increase in student numbers predicted for the 1980's and 1990's. They recommended:

- the transfer of some courses such as Asian Studies exclusively to Murdoch,
- the channelling of all growth in teacher training numbers to Murdoch and
- the temporary pegging of the enrolments of the other institutions to 1981 levels.

None of these concessions was forthcoming, however, and the only significant change brought about as a result of the report was the establishment of a Commerce program at Murdoch. This course was to prove to be a powerful magnet for international students in the future.
It is notable that the chairman, Professor Birt, in a dissenting letter to the Western Australian Premier and Cabinet, expressed the view that Murdoch should become part of UWA, concentrating on Biological and Environmental sciences. This kind of high-level expression of no confidence in the future of the university has haunted it to the present day. In July 1986, the Western Australian Minister for Education, Mr Robert Pearce, announced that he was investigating the prospect of amalgamating Murdoch University with the Western Australian College of Advanced Education and the WAIT. Significant pressure was also placed on the viability of Murdoch University by the move to change the status of WAIT to that of a university under the name of Curtin University of Technology (Pearce, 1986). Given that WAIT was already the largest tertiary institution in Western Australia, its elevation to university status would potentially further restrict the number of students available to Murdoch. By the time of publishing of this work, several other proposals had been made to amalgamate Murdoch: first, in 1989, with the UWA, then with the newest WA university, Edith Cowan and, subsequently, with the Curtin University of Technology.

International Students
Like most other tertiary institutions in Australia, Murdoch University had significant experience with international students before the Commonwealth Government policy changes in 1985-86 that allowed for the enrolment of full-fee paying international students. Students had been admitted to Murdoch University under the various existing aid programs, and others had joined the University for various lengths of time as exchange or Study Abroad students. Shortly before the full-fee policy changes, the Senate of Murdoch University noted a significant increase in the number of applications for undergraduate places from international students. This was seen to be due in part to restrictions that were being placed on such enrolments at some of the other, longer established, universities which were finally experiencing some degree of overcrowding. There had also been quite a lot of publicity about the University’s
acquisition of some on-site student accommodation and this was seen as a significant attraction to international students. (Subsequently, student accommodation was to prove to be both an attractant and a source of significant problems for Murdoch’s full-fee international student program.) To ensure that the University did not suffer from any deleterious results that might flow from too great increases in the number of international students, the Senate resolved that numbers of these students should be restricted to five percent of the total student enrolment for 1985 (Senate, 27/2/84).

In late 1984 and early 1985 there was some discussion with Professor Bean Sean Goh, an entrepreneurial member of the UWA Mathematics staff, who was proposing to establish an international college in Perth. Professor Goh approached Murdoch University on the basis that the University might play a part in the provision of the tertiary level courses that he planned to offer, in an institution that would provide for international and local students at both secondary and tertiary level. The Vice-Chancellor was encouraged by the Senate to obtain further information and hold further discussions with Professor Goh. There was a suggestion at the March 1983 meeting of the Senate that it might be possible to enter into negotiations for the lease of some land on the University site for the establishment of the international college. Eventually, the proposal for the campus at Yanchep, in mid 1985, overshadowed that of Professor Goh (Simmonds 1985a), but the incident does serve as an example of the willingness of the decision makers at Murdoch to explore possibilities outside the traditionally accepted roles of a university.

Prior to 1985, matters concerning international exchange students and visiting academics, as well as relations with overseas institutions, were the province of the Committee on Overseas Relations (COR). The international students enrolled on a scholarship basis were the responsibility of the same general administrative structures as other students. Once the international students were enrolled, they were treated in
the same way as local students, with no special services being provided for them. The COR had negotiated some limited student exchange agreements with overseas universities and was active in encouraging staff visits and exchanges in furtherance of the internationalisation goals of the university. The staff were well experienced in dealing with overseas institutions and people and thus represented a pool of expertise available to take on an expanded role such as would be necessitated by a full-fee program.

Conclusion
Murdoch University in 1985 was, thus, subject to a number of pressures that forced it to seek non-traditional solutions in an attempt to ensure its future viability and even its very existence as an institution.

- Due to its total reliance on ever-dwindling Commonwealth funding and a lack of alternatives, it was constantly short of money. When Vice-Chancellor Glenn Willson was asked about his worst times at Murdoch he replied, “Trying to raise more money” (Rogers 1984).
- Lack of population growth, particularly in nearby suburbs, and poor accessibility from other areas around Perth, further restricted the numbers of potential students at Murdoch.
- A less than anticipated growth in the numbers of students seeking university places and growing competition for post-secondary students from WAIT and the TAFE sector meant that there were fewer students available to the two universities. The UWA, as the long-established institution was more attractive to those students.
- Murdoch’s enrolments also suffered from a poor community image: “Partly due to lack of understanding by the people of Perth and partly deliberate bad-mouthing by the local press and, in particular, by students and academics from UWA” (Boyce 1984).
Students were reluctant to enrol at the University because of problems with course offerings and administrative structures that could be traced back to the philosophies of the founders of the university:

*Murdoch’s founding fathers could not have anticipated the very hard times that lay ahead, though perhaps they should have been ready for the public reception that greeted some of their innovations in educational organisation and curriculum, however refreshing and enterprising they might have been at the time.*  
(Boyce 1985)

On the positive side, Murdoch had staff, especially among the senior decision-making group, who were keen to expand the student and financial bases and who had the entrepreneurial drive to bring about significant change (Nairn 1992, Dunn 1992). Murdoch also had a strong, well-experienced academic staff, dedicated both to high standards and the Murdoch philosophy of seeking excellence in teaching. It had developed the kinds of programs in the Commerce, Economics, Computer Science and Communications areas that were already being sought by international students looking to Australia for their tertiary education.
CHAPTER FOUR:

THE DECISION TO BECOME A PROVIDER TO FULL-FEE STUDENTS

The Yanchep International Campus Proposal

In the middle of 1985, the Senate of Murdoch University received a proposal inviting the University to become a partner in a project to set up an international campus at Yanchep, some fifty-six kilometres north of Perth; and, thus, seventy kilometres from the existing Murdoch campus. The proposal was put forward by the Western Australian EXIM Corporation Ltd. (EXIM) (a State Government instrumentality) on behalf of Yanchep Sun City Pty Ltd, a property development subsidiary of the Japanese Tokyu Corporation. In the opinion of all of those interviewed, from past and present Murdoch staff, it was this proposal that was the trigger for the eventual acceptance of full-fee paying international students at the University. Diane Stone (1987), in her study of the project, credited the events with a national significance: “As the first initiative of its kind, Yanchep marked a turning point in higher education”. The proposal formed a real focus for discussion of the issue of the export of education services, both on the Murdoch campus and beyond.

In announcing a feasibility study into the project in August 1985, the pro-business Labour Premier of Western Australia, Brian Burke, said that the privately funded university would cost an estimated $150 million. “Mr Burke said that if the study supported the project - and he was confident it would - work would start next year. The first student intake would be in 1988” (The West Australian 1985a). Like his counterparts in Canberra, Burke’s enthusiasm for the concept of providing education to international students on a full cost-recovery basis was based on economic rather than educational or altruistic motivations. This is clear from Burke’s announcement
in which he said that the new university would have, “…significant benefits for Western Australia in terms of foreign exchange, tourism and international good will” (The West Australian 1985a). There were also significant political reasons for the State Government’s strong support for the project. The Burke ALP Government was elected in February 1983 with a commitment to the reform of many Western Australian public institutions. The Burke Government was strongly influenced by the same contemporary new right and corporatist economic philosophies that were described earlier as affecting both the national and international educational scenes (O’Brien 1986, McMahon 1991). Burke also wanted more involvement of the private business sector in both the management of government activities and in the generation of funds to finance his reform agenda. At a meeting shortly after the election:

The Premier explained that he was exploring ways in which he could get private enterprise participation within government. The Premier said he was seeking advice on how to commercialise a number of government activities and bring in private sector expertise to manage government assets. (Horgan, 1991)

(The realisation of these aims and the sometimes reckless manner in which they were pursued, would eventually lead to significant loss of public monies, culminating in the ‘WA Inc’ scandals and the fall of both Burke and his Government.) By 1985, the Australian Labor Party in government had formed many strategic alliances with the financial and property-development sectors of the Western Australian commercial world. Success in the Yanchep Campus venture would enhance the possibilities for the future support of those companies, both financially and at election time. Additionally, the northern suburban areas, that would benefit most from the enhanced employment opportunities and the new infrastructure to be generated by the project, were among the most marginal electorates in the Perth metropolitan area.
The Tokyu Corporation

The Japanese company Tokyu, through its subsidiary Sun City Holdings, held about seven thousand hectares of land in the Yanchep area and had plans for the establishment of a satellite city of Perth on the site. Response to the land project had been very weak, the people of Perth preferring to buy land and settle along the northern corridor suburbs much nearer to the capital city.

Sun City had hoped to benefit from the 1987 America’s Cup defence that resulted from the victory in 1983 of a Western Australian based yacht owned by Alan Bond. (Bond had sold the original Sun City project and land to Tokyu in 1978, and was later to be the founder of Australia’s first property-based and fully privatised university in Queensland.) There was a small marina at Yanchep and, for some time, there was a general feeling around Perth that the facilities would be expanded to allow the yacht races to be held in the ocean nearby. There was, however, very little accommodation in the area, and the large number of challengers that eventuated would have required the construction of extensive, expensive infrastructure. The cup defence eventually settled itself around the already developed port facilities at Fremantle, fifteen kilometres west of Perth city. The hoped-for publicity and development at Yanchep did not eventuate.

It is interesting to note that Murdoch University had in fact been a beneficiary of the cup defence. The Italian challenge syndicate, Consorzio Italia, had leased accommodation facilities in the Student House complex at Murdoch for its crew and support staff. Murdoch then used the resulting funds to increase the number of accommodation units and to build a function centre on the campus. In the aftermath
of the cup defence, one writer observed that the accommodation project at Murdoch was, “One of the few genuinely benefiting Western Australia and its community members” (Dale, 1986). This made the Murdoch project somewhat of an exception from others connected with the Americas Cup. In many other instances, according to Dale, “There was much waste and much lining of private pockets with taxpayers’ money”.

Tokyu, 1985, had decided to develop the area as a university city along the lines of those in Europe and the USA. The core of the development was to be a residential university campus specifically designed for full-fee paying international students. A student population of somewhere between three and ten thousand was envisaged, depending on which feasibility study one takes into account. The Murdoch study arrived at the lowest figure, with EXIM’s prediction in the five to six thousand range, and a later study by the Western Australian Institute of Technology (WAIT) providing the top estimate (Stone 1987). (The implications of the involvement of WAIT will be discussed later, in the consideration of Murdoch’s response to the proposal.)

Tokyu’s role in the project would be to provide the land and the funding for the construction of the campus buildings and residential facilities for the students in an international university campus at Yanchep. It was also to underwrite the recurrent funding of the campus in the eventuality that, at least in the early years, there was insufficient income from student fees. This was an essential undertaking from Murdoch’s point-of-view, because the strongest objections to the project were based on a concern that the Commonwealth government might be called upon to make good any shortfall. Apart from its expertise in property development, Tokyu had some
experience with the development and management of educational facilities, having
controlled the Musashi Institute of Technology and several other schools and institutes
in Japan since 1955 (Tokyu 1999). The return to the company, in this case, would be
the profit that it anticipated from the sale of its land to the population that would be
needed to service and support the staff and student body at the campus (Dunn 1992,

The project envisaged a complete city development surrounding the university
campus, with housing, a commercial and retail centre and a light industrial area. Sun
City also planned an expansion of recreation and tourist facilities, including a resort
and marina facility to service the students, the local populace and visitors to the
university. It was an extremely ambitious project in which the company set out to
mirror, in a short time, the kind of development that had often taken hundreds of years
in Europe and many decades in the USA. Dunn (1992) saw this as the major potential
weakness of the project. He said that the so-called ‘university towns’ of Europe were
initially quite small because the universities themselves possessed the infrastructure to
make them largely self-sufficient. It was only after the university was well established
that the providers of other services began to settle in the vicinity. In the case of the
USA, Dunn said, universities like Penn State, for example, were actually larger than
their surrounding towns. He could not envisage that the single act of establishing a
university campus would precipitate a ‘land rush’ in the area. One of the residents of
the Yanchep area (Singleton 1994) said that even the relatively cheap land, including
initial free club membership, on the golf course estate, had attracted only a limited
number of buyers. Most people believed the area to be too far from central Perth.
The Role Of EXIM

EXIM was an export development and international marketing body set up by the Burke government to increase the penetration of Western Australian goods and services into overseas markets, in particular the nearby Asian ones. EXIM was, in fact, one of the few ‘WA Inc’ projects that returned significant profits to the Western Australian Government. It was especially successful in the promotion of Western Australia’s educational institutions and the sale of their programs to international students (Grill 1991). The Chairman of EXIM, John Horgan, is reported to have said that: “The Corporation had targeted the education market in South-East Asia as a very lucrative one. If the project went ahead, it promised to be a major earner of foreign exchange for the country” (Simmonds 1985b). EXIM’s role in the international campus project would be to provide, on a fee-for-service basis, marketing and promotional expertise designed to attract international students to the new campus (Murdoch University 1985f). The possession of established offices in Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong, seen as two of the most likely sources of prospective students, added to EXIM’s standing in the project. There were also plans in place to open a further office in Jakarta, increasing its penetration into the markets.

In an article that ‘oozed’ with a sense of his confidence that the project would proceed, David Hatt, EXIM’S representative in the campus proposal, was reported to have said that there was no doubt about the potential size of the market. (Hatt would have been aware of the level of potential demand because he had been Western Australia’s representative on the Australian Board of Trade’s mission to Southeast Asia in 1985.) He said that there was already much goodwill towards Western Australia in Asia because of the good experiences of students returning home from
WAIT, which, he said: “Is renowned throughout the region”. Hatt warned, however, that there would be ongoing heavy competition from UK and USA universities, which had long-established markets in the region. He asserted that there had also been considerable interest in the Yanchep project from outside Asia, in particular from California and Italy. In addition, he revealed that there were plans for a significant number of Australian students to attend the university on a scholarship or other subsidised basis (*The West Australian*, 1985b). However, this latter statement is not supported anywhere else. The description of the proposal, as set out on the *Interim Report* of the International Campus Task Force, contains the disclaimer: “Enrolment will not, initially be open to Australian non-fee-paying students”. While this appears to leave open the prospect of such enrolments in the future, it is clear from the Task Force’s report that the planners at Murdoch had no such intention.

Murdoch’s Role

Murdoch University’s part in the project would be to provide the expertise in the design of the teaching, learning and research facilities of the campus and also for the student residential buildings that would be an adjunct to the institution. Murdoch would also manage the academic programs of the campus: from the registration of the students, through their courses of study, to their graduation. The campus would be managed as a subsidiary of the main one at Murdoch, from whence courses would be developed and staffing provided. In return for its provision of tuition and management services, the University would receive income from the fees charged to the students. (As will be seen later in this study, it was the University’s intention to generate a significant profit from this project.) It would also be Murdoch’s responsibility to obtain the necessary Commonwealth and State Government
approvals for proposed courses and their fees, building projects etc. as required to bring the project to reality (Murdoch University 1985f).

The International Campus Task Force

The University administration moved quickly to become involved in exploring the proposal, which the Vice-Chancellor described as: “Offering great promise for the university” (Murdoch University 1985a). At the July 1985 meeting of the University Senate, he announced that he had established a “task force” to undertake a feasibility study of the proposal in conjunction with EXIM and Sun City Holdings. The members of the International Campus Task Force were Professor Mal Nairn, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Mr Dan Dunn, the Registrar and Secretary to the Senate, Associate Professor Jeff Gawthorne, Associate Professor of Biochemistry and Dr Elizabeth Harman, Senior Lecturer in Social and Political Theory. Mr Andrew Holloway, the Administrative Officer of the School of Education, was appointed as administrative officer to the group. The Task Force had already met with EXIM at this stage and was about to establish contacts with representatives of Sun City Holdings.

Though not indicated directly in the University documents of the period, it is apparent that there was a significant level of disquiet about the prospect of the University’s involvement in such a project. The Vice-Chancellor found it necessary to state that the feasibility study should not and would not be carried out in secret and that he hoped that members of both the Murdoch community and the general public would be made aware of the proposal under investigation as soon as possible (Murdoch University 1985a). It is not clear what action or report gave rise to this concern.
Allegations of secrecy could not be found in either the campus or public press so it is assumed that it had been expressed in unrecorded meetings with staff and/or students at Murdoch. None of those interviewed recalled such allegations being voiced in their presence. The establishment of the Task Force without reference to any of the formal policy-making bodies on campus, and the revelation that the group had already been meeting before its existence was made public, almost certainly contributed to the perception that some secret deal had been struck with Tokyu. There is also one discrepancy in the public record that suggests that there may have been some reluctance to make the whole community aware of the Yanchep proposal. The Minutes of the July meeting of the Murdoch Senate contain the statement:

_The Senate was informed that following the discussion at the previous meeting, at which the Vice-Chancellor had been encouraged to investigate as a challenge offering great promise for the University the proposal for the establishment of a second campus of the University specifically to attract overseas students under the Government’s new policy guidelines, the Vice-Chancellor had appointed a task force to undertake a feasibility study._

The Minutes of the June meeting, however, have no record of such a discussion. To most of the Murdoch community, the establishment of the Task Force must have come ‘out of the blue’. The perception that there had been an attempt on the part of the Murdoch administration to push through the proposal in secret continued after the public announcement of the project by the Premier and the Vice-Chancellor on August 4, 1985 (_The West Australian_ 1985a). A subsequent newspaper article entitled: “Yanchep Sun City poised for green light” (_The West Australian_, 1985b), made it necessary for Boyce to circulate a memo to all staff to counter speculation that a deal had already been concluded in secret (Boyce, August 1985).

Opposition to the concept of full-fee students had been expressed previously in the Senate, with the meeting of March 1985 resolving to:
Advise the Minister for Education that the Senate would regret any marked increase in fees charged to overseas students admitted to institutions of Tertiary education in Australia, believing that access to such education is an important form of Australian aid.

The formation of the Task Force and the insistence on a public feasibility study effectively set in place a train of events designed to reverse this previous stance. The Task Force members were, in fact, all strong supporters of the involvement of Murdoch in the full-fee paying international student market and they used their enthusiasm to push an originally reluctant Senate in that direction (Nairn 1992, Holloway 1993). One of the Task Force members, Dr Harman, had just returned to the University after a period of secondment to the State Government, where she had been one of the proponents of the establishment of EXIM. In fact, Harman was still working part-time for the State Planning Commission at the time that the Task Force was initiated (Government of Western Australia 1986a). That there had been a significant about-face in attitude on the part of the Senate is also evidenced by the fact that at the July meeting they agreed that the proposed international campus:

...Should be seen as only one aspect of the University’s interest in providing places for full-cost overseas students in accordance with the Government guidelines and that the possibilities of making places available in programmes and at levels which were unlikely to be available at the second campus should also be explored.

That is, it was considered desirable to not only attract students to the dedicated facility at Yanchep, but also to enrol them into the standard courses at the Murdoch campus.

Not everyone on campus was so enthusiastic about the proposal. At the September 1985 meeting of the Murdoch Academic Council, questions were asked about, “The worth of proceeding with the feasibility study in the face of FAUSA opposition and the potentially divisive nature of the exercise”. In response to growing staff concerns, Vice-Chancellor Boyce announced that:
On the advice of the International Campus Task Force, he had established a committee to review the educational and philosophical issues arising from the Yanchep Proposal, and the general issue of the admission of full-fee paying overseas students. (Murdoch University 1985c)

Boyce assured the Senate that, although he had appointed the members of the committee himself because of time constraints, it would be a committee of Academic Council and would report directly to that body. Professor Brian Hill, Dean of the School of Education, would be the convenor of the committee. The Task Force was very aware of the concerns of the academic staff and academic unions on campus, but was still keen to explore the possibilities of the Yanchep proposal (Holloway 1993). The rather hasty formation of the Hill Committee “on the advice of the task force” was a response to those campus pressures. It provided a forum for the expression and discussion of concerns, while allowing the Task Force to continue with the feasibility study. The question as to whether the acceptability of such a proposal should have been established before any discussion of its feasibility was not confronted at that stage. However, the members of the Hill Committee were clearly aware of the dilemma:

One important boundary of the present inquiry needs to be identified at this point. In the logic of an inquiry such as this, questions of desirability must be deemed to precede questions of feasibility. While in practical terms, it would be foolish to investigate the desirability of something which is not feasible, in ethical terms, it would be immoral to proceed with a feasible project which had been judged undesirable. Our committee has therefore proceeded on the assumption that the policies of charging full-fees and establishing a campus at Yanchep are prima facie feasible. Our brief has been to test their desirability qua policies on academic and philosophical grounds.

The findings of the Hill Committee are discussed in detail later in this chapter.

The Public Debate

The Task Force had scarcely begun its feasibility study, when the Yanchep proposal was subjected to a storm of public criticism. Much of the criticism was based on a
misconception that Yanchep would be a private university. In the way that it was envisaged by Tokyu and Murdoch, the Yanchep campus would not have been Australia’s first fully private university, but simply an example of the ongoing privatisation of Australian tertiary education widely recognised as taking place at the time. (See, for example: Smart 1986, Stone 1987).

By late 1986 privatisation was entrenched in higher education jargon with usage extending to very different meanings including non-government funding of research, provision of full-fee places alongside fee places in public institutions, the founding of a private sector alongside the public, and the marketing of academic services to foreigners in their country or ours. (Jones and Anwyl 1987)

A headline in *The Australian* on August 5 1985, announced: “Burke backs study into plan for first private university” (Simmonds 1985b). Though the reporter then wrote her article in terms of a “privately funded university” the “private university” tag had already been given prominence. Adding to the confusion about the status of the Yanchep campus was an intimation by EXIM’s representative, David Hatt, that the government and Murdoch had become involved in planning for the establishment of a “private” university (*The West Australian* 1985b). The Vice-Chancellor was quick to point out to the Senate that there were several inaccuracies in the article and that he had lodged a complaint with EXIM (Murdoch University 1985d). He stressed that the proposal was not for the establishment of a private university, but for an extension of Murdoch University that would be firmly under its control. He said, also, that he had taken steps to clarify the position with Murdoch staff. This action was most necessary, of course, because the staff was the major reservoir of concern about, and opposition to, the proposal. The Secretary-General of the University and Salaried Officers Association of Western Australia, Ray Clohessy, said that the Murdoch University Academic Staff Association (MUASA) was alarmed that plans to establish Australia’s first “private university” at Yanchep could prejudice local students. If the
The project went ahead, international students would have a considerable advantage over local students because they would not be subject to the same intake quotas (*The West Australian* 1985c). The Vice Chancellor also refuted a statement, attributed to the Federal Minister for Education, Susan Ryan, that the international campus proposal required additional safeguards to maintain academic standards. Senator Ryan, apparently not fully advised of the nature of the project as being a subsidiary campus of Murdoch University, had stated that the Federal Government was totally opposed to private universities. The government did not want to see a situation like that in the USA where standards varied greatly from one institution to another and it was feared that this was a possible outcome if universities moved out of the direct control of government.

Subsequently, Dunn reported to the Task Force that he had been advised, while in Canberra, that Ryan was in fact totally opposed to the whole concept of full-fee paying international students (Murdoch University 1985). Ryan had also expressed some concern that the Yanchep proposal may not meet the guidelines set down for fee-paying international students and that: “She would need a lot more information before supporting the Yanchep plan” (*The West Australian* 1985d). Boyce assured the Murdoch University Senate that the proposal fully met the Commonwealth Government’s guidelines and thus required no extra safeguards. As will be seen below, this fear of dilution of academic standards was also the focus of major objections from staff and students on the Murdoch campus. The State Government Minister for Education, Robert Pearce, was reported, in the same newspaper article, as publicly calling for Ryan’s support for the project, stating: “The WA government is determined to go ahead if the feasibility study proves favourable. This proposal is
worth $150 million in capital investment and 200 jobs. We are determined to get that for WA”.

Senator Ryan was not the only one in Commonwealth Government circles to have some qualms about the proposed campus. In one of her statements, Ryan had expressed some misgivings about the on-going funding arrangements for the proposed campus and its recurrent costs (The West Australian 1985e). In this view she was joined by the Member for La Trobe, Peter Milton, who was also under the impression that this was to be a private university:

*In this respect I would like to voice my strong opposition to the proposed new private university in Western Australia. As I understand it, one of the aims of this private institution would be to make higher education in this country an export market. It is apparently intended that Murdoch University will provide administrative support for the establishment of the new private university. Such a proposal will need careful scrutiny as approval has not yet been given by the Commonwealth Parliament for Murdock (sic) University support services which are funded by the Commonwealth to be allocated for the establishment of a private tertiary education institution.*

(Commonwealth of Australia 1985b)

The ALP Caucus Education Committee also voiced its opposition to the privatisation of tertiary education, on the grounds that the experience in the USA had been that private universities inevitably required government financial assistance to survive. Members of the Caucus Committee travelled to Perth to discuss their concerns with Premier Burke. They also spent some time with the Labor MHR for Moore, Alan Blanchard, who had expressed major reservations about the possible adverse effects of the proposed campus on the social structures within his electorate (The West Australian 1985e). Ryan and the Caucus Education Committee were not really the main players, however, and had little real effect on the outcome of the debate. Both Dunn (1992) and Nairn (1992) found that the main driving force for the establishment
of an educational export industry came from the powerful Trade and Prime Minister’s Departments under the influence of Hawke, Dawkins and Walsh.

Australian Democrats leader, Senator Don Chipp, added his voice to the debate, dubbing the project “phoney” and “an absolutely crazy move”. He went on to assert that the venture would rapidly deteriorate into an elitist institution, for which the taxpayer would be paying, but over which the government would have no control. He added that his stance on the issue was backed by powerful national student groups and academic staff associations (The Sunday Times 1985). This outburst brought a swift response from Kerry Collison, Tokyu’s Perth representative, who stated very strongly that the project was firmly delineated as an extension of Murdoch University. He also accused Chipp of making premature comment about a project that was still on the drawing board, because the feasibility study had not been completed.

The position of the conservative opposition parties at Commonwealth level is not completely clear. It is probable that there was support for the Yanchep proposal in light of the strong backing given by the Opposition to the concept of enrolling full-fee paying international students during the debate on the enabling legislation. In his speech to the second reading debate, the opposition spokesman on Education, Peter Shack, a Western Australian, said that:

The Opposition supports the move to raise the fee [Overseas Students Charge] to 35% of cost now and 45% in 1986/87. It also supports the move to access to Australia’s tertiary education institutions for overseas students willing and able to pay fees....Australia has the capacity and skilled manpower rapidly to become a major exporter of educational services.

While not directly advocating acceptance of the Yanchep proposal, Shack rejected the criticism of it by Senator Ryan and several academic and trade union groups: “The
Federation of Australian University Staff Associations, the Federation of College Academics and the ACTU have all begun attacking a market based approach in completely spurious terms” (Commonwealth of Australia 1985b). He accused them of “paranoia” about the effects of privatising tertiary education and of entrepreneurial educational undertakings by tertiary institutions.

At the State level, the conservative opposition certainly supported the proposal. In a press release on August 5 1985, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Barry McKinnon, said that his party hoped that the feasibility study would prove that the project was viable so that Western Australia could benefit from the eventual establishment of the campus. It is possible, however, that Murdoch University was not really the favoured manager for the project. Dr Harman cited a letter from Sir Charles Court, a former Liberal Premier of Western Australia, to the Chairman of Tokyo, critical of Murdoch’s alleged “socialist” atmosphere (Murdoch University 1985h).

The Role Of Robert Pearce.

In what appears to have been a desperate bid to gain the support of his Commonwealth Government counterpart, Western Australian Education Minister Pearce travelled to Canberra in January 1986 for consultations with Senator Ryan. He reassured her that the new campus would be firmly attached to Murdoch and that it would be good for the University giving it “room to grow”. He stressed, also, the social and economic benefits to both Western Australia and the whole nation, from the foreign funds that would flow into the country during the construction of the facilities and from the student fees into the future. He said that his Government was
determined to go ahead if the project was at all viable and feasible. In comments to
the press, just before leaving for Canberra, Pearce said that he did not believe that the
reported opposition from Murdoch staff and students was as strong as it was being
made out, and that the University Senate supported the project. It appears that Pearce
was either not fully informed of the true situation at Murdoch at that time, or that he
deliberately played down the level of opposition as part of his bid for support in
Canberra (The West Australian 1986a.)

Certainly, Pearce had a reputation for thrusting aside opposition to projects in which
he was involved. Pearce came from a background of student politics (at one time a
member of the Young Liberals) the teaching profession, and Vice-President of the
State School Teachers’ Union of Western Australia (SSTUWA). A mass meeting of
the SSTUWA on July 27th 1986 moved a motion expressing a vote of no confidence in
the Minister. Speakers at the meeting claimed that, amongst other things, that he had
lost sight of his origins and had used the Union as a stepping-stone to a political career
as a member of the ALP (The Western Teacher 1986). However, Pearce claimed that,
“The Teachers’ Union wasn’t getting anywhere with the Education Department or the
Government. So I decided if I wanted to make wholesale changes I had to belong to
the political process” (The Western Mail 1984). As Minister of Education he pushed
through a number of unpopular educational and administrative changes in a manner
that caused the President of the SSTUWA, Jeff Bateman, to say that, “He would not
be upset if Pearce relinquished his education portfolio tomorrow”, and to describe
Pearce’s style of negotiation as ‘provocative’ (The Western Mail 1987). In the same
newspaper article, Adele Farina, Pearce’s planning advisor, said, “Pearce has become
the ‘hatchet man’ for the party. If there is a tough job the Premier hasn’t the time to
handle he knows he can give it to Pearce. It will get done”. Pearce himself said that he made no apologies and that he was proud of his uncompromising stands (*The Sunday Times* 1987). From the public announcement of the Yanchep project to his final, bitter comments about Boyce’s handling of the proposal, Pearce pressed aggressively for its acceptance.

The Hill Committee

While the public debate continued, the Hill Committee began its task of examining the philosophical and educational issues involved in the proposal.

In addition to the convenor, Professor Hill, the committee was composed of Dr Max Cake, Dr Paul Stange, Ms Pat Tulloch and Professor Ray Wales. The Terms of Reference for the Committee were as follows:

(i) Identify and examine the educational and philosophical arguments and principles raised by the International Campus proposal and the general concept of full-fee paying international students.

(ii) Report to the Vice-Chancellor and the International Campus Task Force no later than mid-October 1985 so that early progress could be made towards a decision on both aspects of its investigation: the Yanchep campus proposal and the issue of the enrolment of full-fee international students at Murdoch.

The intent of this second Term was clarified at a meeting of the Academic Council on 25 September 1985, at which the Vice-Chancellor stated that he expected the Committee to submit its report first to Academic Council for discussion before it was sent to himself and the Task Force. The Task Force was to “take account” of the report before compiling and presenting its own report. This was in recognition both of the fact that the Committee was actually an agent of Academic Council and the
increasing demands from the Murdoch staff to be heard on the matters before the Committee.

The Debate At Murdoch

The Yanchep campus proposal gave rise to a large amount of debate on the Murdoch University campus. Enthusiastic supporters of the project, such as Nairn and Harman, continued to speak out in favour of the project, and the Senate expressed its support for the proposal, contingent on the outcome of the feasibility study. There was also some other support at Murdoch from bodies concerned with financial matters and facilities. At an initial briefing by members of the Task Force, the spokesman for the University Salaried Officers’ Association said that there was: “No opposition to the concept of a privately funded campus. General staff appeared to be enthusiastic about the proposal, partly because of new opportunities for employment and promotion” (Murdoch University 1985i). However, it soon became apparent that the majority of the academic staff was very much opposed to the whole concept. They were joined in this position, to some extent, by the student body.

An ‘open house’ seminar was held on the Murdoch campus, in early October 1985, to discuss the Yanchep proposal. The President of FAUSA, Neil Harpley, was described as “decidedly hostile” to the project in The Australian newspaper (Simmonds 1985c). Harpley claimed that the proposal threatened the homogeneous nature of university education by introducing a hierarchy of institutions based on access to private funding with different terms and conditions of employment for staff at the various sites. In this he seems to have ignored the fact that this situation already existed in a de facto manner because of the perceived status differences between Australian universities.
(This problem was discussed, earlier in this study, as one of those confronting Murdoch University in its developmental phase.) Harpley also expressed his support for the stance taken by those who decried the whole concept of full-fee international students on the grounds that it would spell the end of higher education’s role as a significant form of foreign aid.

Professor Noel Dunbar of CTEC was less outspoken, but he made it clear that CTEC was not in favour of such initiatives as the Yanchep campus or the enrolling of full-fee paying international students on Australian sites, preferring offshore delivery of educational services by Australian universities. In such a system, Australian institutions would provide courses and staff, on a fee-for-service basis, to students on site in overseas institutions. This would, he claimed, avoid the risk of CTEC funds being called on to ‘bail out’ institutions if their Australian-based operation fell short of expectations: “We have an unhappy record of being forced to pick up the tab for operations that have fallen somewhat short of original expectations”. Though not referred to by Dunbar, he was almost certainly influenced by the situation in which there had been calls on governments to assume the funding of the education of a number of international students left stranded when some Secondary and Business Colleges in Western Australia collapsed during the 1980s.

Professor Nairn, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, speaking in support of the project, stressed that this initiative would not lead to the formation of a private university, but a satellite campus firmly under Murdoch control. He assured the seminar that there would be no drain on Murdoch funds because the risks were all on Tokyu’s part and that, conversely, the proposal opened up promising new revenue-raising potential to
make up for the continued fall in government funding. Nairn was supported in this view by Ray Clohessy, the General Secretary of the University Salaried Officers’ Association. Clohessy refuted the notion that there was any risk to Commonwealth Government funds and claimed that they could not be accessed for rescue purposes even if the project did fail. He called the FAUSA objections “Luddite”, asserting that the completion of the project would create both funding and employment opportunities at the university. The potential represented by this point-of-view was also the basis for the support of several non-tenured academics who addressed the seminar. They said that they were frustrated in their ambitions to pursue an academic career because of lack of opportunities in a university that was small and showed little signs of immediate growth. The Murdoch/Tokyu proposal would, they claimed, offer them, at the very least, job experience not presently available. They were, however, contradicted by another staff member, Gary Wickham who expressed grave doubts that there would be any increase in tenured positions. To some extent, Wickham was to be proved correct in his misgivings. The International Campus Task Force found it difficult to address the dilemma created by the need for tenured positions on one hand, to attract high-quality staff to the remote campus and, on the other hand, the requirement for flexibility of staffing levels in response to changes in market demand for particular courses. In their Interim Report, they were to recommend a policy based on a variety of types of tenure that would be subject to termination on six month’s notice and the payment of some compensation.

There was no record in the report of speakers representing the position of MUASA to the seminar and it is assumed that they had not formulated their stance clearly at that stage. Their strong opposition to the project was, however, soon made known to the
Senate of the University. The academics presented the administration with a twenty-one point ‘manifesto of objection’ to the Yanchep campus proposal. The objections can be summarised under five categories.

Educational Issues. There was concern that the separate campus presented a danger to the academic standards of Murdoch University. It was believed that there was a significant risk of both lowered standards for admission, engendered by the need to keep the institution full of students, and a reduced rigour that might occur in an attempt to ensure high passing rates for the foreign students. This had the potential, it was stated, to affect the academic standing of the University both at home and abroad, for many years into the future. This loss of standing would be even greater should the venture fail to sustain itself over a period of time. It was felt also that academic freedom would be reduced and that control of the curriculum would pass out of the hands of academic staff. This would potentially give rise to a lack of balance in the courses at the Yanchep campus with the emphasis being placed on a narrow, vocationally oriented set of courses. Further, there was concern that the necessity to share resources between the two campuses would lead to inadequate materials and support facilities on both sites.

Philosophical Issues. As was the position with many of the other voices in opposition to the proposal, the academic staff expressed the belief that the provision of tertiary education represented an important aspect of Australia’s foreign aid responsibility. They also echoed the concerns of those who feared that this project would be the forerunner of an inevitable movement to the full privatisation of tertiary education in Australia. There was also potential, it was stated, for this type of development to lead
to the formation of elitist institutions within the tertiary system. Such universities would then attract students and resources away from the established ‘traditional’ ones like Murdoch.

Social Issues. There was considerable alarm about the concept of an all-Asian student body, the most probable outcome of the establishment of the Yanchep campus. This could potentially prove to be very difficult for the academic staff working there and for the local community, because of the expectations that this isolated social group would impose on all concerned. Talk of the inclusion of a percentage of Australian students had not allayed these concerns and had, in fact, raised a fear that such a step would increase the possibility of the introduction of fees for all Australian students.

Industrial Issues. Academic staff stated that there was a real risk that the terms and conditions of employment for staff at the Yanchep campus could be inferior to those at other institutions, with a lack of security because of possible large swings in demand for various courses. There was also a concern that staff would have to work at both campuses, some seventy kilometres apart, severely reducing their working conditions and adding to workloads and general stress upon those staff involved. A flow-on of the increased workloads and a potential reduction in the time available for research were other causes for opposition to the plan.

Administrative Issues. Questions were raised about the balance of power between the two campuses, with almost all of the decision-making emanating from the Murdoch campus and little autonomy being granted to those staff who actually worked full-time at Yanchep. It was feared that pressure from staff, students and the backers of the
project might quickly lead to demands for the creation of separate administrative and decision-making structures with the potential for the eventual formation of an independent institution.

Yet another aspect of the opposition of the academic staff was outlined by Dr Walter Bloom, who was President of MUASA at the time of the Yanchep proposal. He said that many of the staff were concerned about the financial aspects of the proposed Yanchep campus and, indeed, of the enrolment of full-fee paying international students at Murdoch. He cited as an example, that the proposed fee for certain post-graduate Science courses was less than the amount funded by CTEC for similar places in the University. At the same time, the proposed fees for some of the undergraduate courses outside of the Science area were slightly above the CTEC-funded level. This would lead, according to Bloom, to either of two unacceptable solutions: either the post-graduate courses would be under-funded, to the disadvantage of both students and the faculty, or the funds from student fees would be used to cross-subsidise the courses, creating an injustice to the students paying their fees in good faith (Bloom 1994). As will be seen in later discussion, the method of distribution of the funds from student fees followed neither of these patterns, but was managed in a manner that, to some extent, justified the concerns of the Murdoch staff.

The intense and continuous opposition of the academic staff at Murdoch was recognised by Pearce as a major factor in the eventual withdrawal of the university from the Yanchep proposal. Recognition of this was also expressed in the public media when the *West Australian* (1985f) reported that: “Strong opposition by Murdoch University academic staff could kill off the Yanchep plan”. It was also
reported that the Vice-Chancellor, had said that the project would not go ahead unless there was overwhelming academic staff support. The writer of the article then proceeded to demonstrate the depth of the opposition. In an interview for the article, the Secretary of the staff association, Dr Don Smart, said that he thought it unlikely that the project would go ahead because the obstacles identified by the staff would seem to be insurmountable. The association, he said, had voted against the proposal by forty-six votes to five. Smart identified the major obstacles in similar terms to the original staff ‘manifesto’. The project, he said, was socially and educationally undesirable. The prospect of students in a culturally isolated enclave, partaking of a narrow curriculum of commerce, computing, physical sciences, mathematics and engineering, was counter to the philosophy of education espoused at Murdoch. Further, the staff saw unresolvable industrial and administrative problems concerned with catering for the remoteness of the satellite institution from the main campus. Smart’s position, as Secretary and sometime spokesman for MUASA on this topic, led, inevitably, to his identification as a major source of the opposition to the project. An article in *The Australian* newspaper, on February 26, 1986, described the withdrawal of Murdoch from the Yanchep project as a victory for MUASA and for Smart. In a letter to the editor of *The Australian*, Smart denied that the statement was an accurate description of the situation, stating that it was not a “victory” for anyone (Smart 1986b). He said that MUASA was simply the focus for the articulation of widespread opposition among staff and students to the proposal. However, Smart continued to voice his personal opposition to the Yanchep proposal both in the press (Smart 1986c), and by addressing the WAIT Academic Staff Association on the issues that they should consider before committing to the venture (Yorke 1986).
Student Reaction

There appears to have been little student interest in either the Yanchep proposal or the concept of full-fee paying international students. There is no mention of either topic in the 1985 issues of METIOR, and the Murdoch University Guild of Students was almost silent on these matters throughout most of the period of discussion from late 1985 to early 1986. The minutes of the August 1985 Guild Secretariat meeting referred to, “A meeting to discuss the international campus to be held on Friday at 3.30 and several Secretariat members may attend” (Murdoch University Guild of Students 1985a). If they did so, there is no record of the meeting or of them reporting back to the Guild at the September meeting. Nor is there any record in the minutes of the Task Force of student attendance or input at any of the briefing sessions held at that time. No meetings of the Guild Secretariat were held in October or November, because they could not raise a quorum, despite several attempts (Murdoch University Guild of Students 1985b). In January 1986, there was a suggestion that a special meeting of the Guild be held to discuss the Yanchep proposal, but, again, there is no record that this meeting eventuated (Murdoch University Guild of Students 1986a).

The Secretariat did decide to write to the Vice-Chancellor asking for permission to use the same questionnaire as that to be distributed by the Hill Committee to the Murdoch staff, but by March: “In light of the dramatic events over the last two weeks, is it still necessary to proceed with the Questionnaire? Metior is choc-a-block with information on the proposal, and I would have thought that was sufficient” (Murdoch University Guild of Students 1986b).

MUASA set out to enlist the support of the Murdoch student body with an open letter to the students published in the campus magazine METIOR. The letter was not
published until late February 1986 and was, therefore, overtaken by the withdrawal of Murdoch from the feasibility study. However, the letter is pertinent to our understanding of the issues because of its focus on the perceived disadvantages to students. In the letter, MUASA asserted that there had been no consultation with students about the establishment of a second campus of the University. This statement is counter to the claim made by the Task Force in its Interim Report, in which it said: “During its study, the Task Force held fortnightly briefings with the representatives of the academic and general staff associations, the student guild and convocation; and weekly meetings with the Vice-Chancellor” (Murdoch University 1985b). On the other hand, there is no record of student representatives reporting back to their Guild on the matter. In light of the general lack of interest displayed by students in this matter, and the inability of the Guild to hold even Secretariat meetings, it appears most likely that the students did not attend the briefings and take advantage of the opportunity to be consulted. The MUASA letter asked students to consider the issues involved in the proposed venture, raising many of the same concerns that were included in the staff ‘manifesto’. The danger to the concept of a free, liberal education was stressed, as was the problem of providing genuine representation for staff and students, at both campuses, on decision-making bodies such as the Senate, Academic Council, School Boards and the many other panels on which students had representatives. There was reference to the “ghetto effect” of such an institution, pointing out that high concentrations of international students at the University of New South Wales and Monash University had led to serious social problems with “severe student disorder”. Related to this, the letter claimed, were potential problems with the standard of English language of the students. A low standard could lead to a reduction of rigour in the presentation and assessment of courses and could also bring
about huge new demands on the resources of the Education Services and Teaching Resources unit (ESTR), that had been established to assist all students to improve their study skills and the presentation of their written work. The possible threat of the reintroduction of tuition fees for all students was also raised: “On the grounds of equity, it is hard to see how the government will be able to continue to deny access to Australian students who have the financial capacity to pay”.

The Hill Committee’s Report

Although the Hill committee called for submissions from staff and other interested parties, and set aside some time for the hearing of verbal contributions, much of the research and analysis was actually carried out by the members of the Committee. This was especially true of the Yanchep Campus proposal, as evidenced by the Committee’s request to the Senate that it be authorised to carry out a survey of staff opinion on the matter, because it believed that it did not have the views of a wide enough cross-section of staff (Murdoch University 1985e). The Interim Report of the Task Force recorded that the Hill Committee received only four written and four oral submissions from members of staff (Murdoch University 1985b). The staff survey was approved and produced, but the collapse of the Yanchep proposal in early 1986 determined that it would never be distributed. It is not clear from the documentation, or from Professor Hill, why it was felt necessary to carry out such a survey in light of the already well-documented objections that had been presented to the Senate, and the clear opposition indicated by an earlier, less formal survey carried out by MUASA. This survey had shown that, of a total of fifty-seven percent in opposition to the proposal, thirty-four percent had declared themselves to be “strongly negative”. Conversely, of a total of twenty-nine in support of the proposal, only nine percent
were “strongly supportive” (MUASA, 1885). Additionally, all of the small number of submissions that had been presented to the Committee argued against the proposal. It seems probable that the survey would have been used to give a kind of authoritative finality to the recommendations of the Committee and reiterate to the Task Force that the Yanchep concept faced very significant opposition on the Murdoch campus.

The International Campus

The findings of the Hill Committee in regard to the Yanchep campus proposal were based on very similar arguments and objections to those outlined in the discussion of the public and on-campus debates. The Committee recommended against any involvement with that project. In particular, the Committee members were very worried about the possibility, even probability, that the campus might in time become a private, independent institution, competing for public sector funding in a scenario similar to the dilemma of the private versus government school systems in Australia.

_The pressure to grant government subsidy to private universities, in the light of the fact that Australians are studying in them, would prove as irresistible as it did in the Menzies era in relation to private schools. The claims of the private sector, in turn, would then compete for the government dollars available for higher education, and tend to reduce the flexibility of public universities._

(Murdoch University 1985b)

Further, the members could see that there were likely to be huge administrative problems involved in the maintenance of two campuses, particularly in light of the great distance between them. They feared that the travel and workload impost on staff would prove too arduous, leading to both extra burdens on the university’s resources and the almost inevitable loss of highly qualified staff.

_We find it difficult to believe that management fees could be so much in excess of the costs associated with travel, extra administrative appointments and extra committee time as to provide any real recompense, in terms of additional research funds and facilities, to academic staff for their extra contributions to academic surveillance._

(Murdoch University 1985b)
Finally, there was seen to be a general feeling that the establishment of a foreign educational enclave in a semi-rural suburb was socially and culturally unacceptable. In particular there was a concern that, “Racist fears are far more likely to be stirred by the placing of a relatively large group of overseas students adjacent to a small local community than by domiciling them in or near a metropolitan university, as has hitherto been the pattern in Australia” (Murdoch University 1985b). Interestingly, the local authority responsible for the Yanchep area appeared to have had no such qualms: “Professor Nairn and Dr Harman reported that they had received a positive response from Wanneroo Shire Councillors at a joint briefing session arranged by Yanchep Sun City. No mention was made of concern about a large resident population of Asian students, and there were several offers of assistance” (Murdoch University 1985j).

Full-Fee Paying International Students
Whereas the opposition to the Yanchep proposal is clear and well documented, the situation with regard to the enrolment of full-fee paying international students at Murdoch University is less obvious. It is certain that there was at least some opposition to the whole concept of fee-paying, as exemplified by the stance of Bloom, and as a minor part of the argument advanced in MUASA’S letter to students in METIOR. The findings of the Hill Committee are the critical indicator in the consideration of this issue.

In response to the task of identifying and examining the educational and philosophical arguments and principles, the Committee began by examining the whole question of, “Who pays for tertiary education?” The report argued that, given the existence of a limit to the financial resources of a nation: “It is morally acceptable to consider that
fees may have to be charged for educational services, even by public institutions” (Murdoch University 1985b). The link between the scarcity of a service and the moral acceptability of charging for its provision is not really established, with the ensuing argument based rather on the more pragmatic stance that students undertaking higher education gain a competitive advantage in their subsequent search for employment. Thus, they or their parents could conceivably be expected to meet at least some of the cost of their education. Alternatively, this cost must be met from the public purse on the assumption that a better-educated population is advantageous to the nation as a whole. This was the rhetoric, at least, behind the sweeping changes to Australian tertiary education initiated by Dawkins. Historically, for reasons of social acceptability, equity and the political danger of ‘voter backlash’, Australian governments had never followed the road of attempting to recover the full costs of tuition from either Australian or international students. Though some, like Senator Walsh, had shown themselves prepared to take on the political risks involved.

International higher education students had, for many years, benefited greatly from having the same fee conditions as Australian students. This had changed, however, in the 1980s with a distinction being made between some students receiving scholarships, fully funded under Australia’s foreign aid programs, and other students being charged a fee that partially recovered the cost of their education. The admission of international students to Australian universities was recognised by the Hill Committee as being based upon Australia’s national self-interest in forming trade and other links with neighbouring countries, as well as on a generous spirit of providing aid to those countries, especially those of Southeast Asia, as they developed. From the point-of-view of the University staff, the opportunity to admit international
students under Australia’s aid program enabled the institution and its members to
identify with the humanitarian intent of the process. The inclusion of these students,
the report asserted, also allowed universities to promote the cause of
internationalisation and to work towards the elimination of the insularity incipient in
Australia’s position as a “Western” nation in an Asian setting. Further, the reputation
of the Australian tertiary system of education, and Murdoch University in particular,
would be enhanced, because the returning graduates would become honorary
ambassadors.

There was some concern expressed on campus that the assistance given to those
students on scholarships may not necessarily benefit those unable to otherwise afford
a university education. The Committee observed that there was evidence that at least
a proportion of the candidates were supported by the sacrifices of an extended family
group rather than being, as believed by many Australians, from richer families who
could afford to pay fees. There was no mechanism to distinguish between the two
groups in the granting of scholarships. With some small reservation about this
potential lack of equity, the Hill Committee recommended that: “Murdoch University
affirm the desirability of continuing to make places available for students admitted
under overseas aid arrangements” (Murdoch University, 1985b).

In its consideration of the full-fee aspect of its terms of reference, the Hill Committee
recognised the potential financial advantages that could accrue to Murdoch. Not only
would the university be able to generate alternative financial reserves (so called
‘number two accounts’), but the increased student numbers would also lead to
economies of scale in both administrative processing and in the ‘topping up’ of
programs that were currently under-subscribed (Murdoch University 1985b). There were, however, concerns that must be set against the potential financial gains. It might transpire, for example, that changes in economic or political conditions in the source countries could lead to substantial reductions in enrolments at some time in the future. An institution that was over-reliant on fees could suffer greatly in such circumstances. Further, the Committee expressed concern that the Commonwealth Government, seeing the financial success of the programs, might cut its share of the funding to universities that engaged in fee-for-service activities. (Commonwealth Education Minister Ryan had actually warned Australia’s Vice-Chancellors that this was likely to be the case (Ryan 1999).)

A serious potential problem for universities embarking on such a venture would be that ambitious and successful marketing programs, leading to the subsequent presence of a large number of international students, might change the very nature of the institutions. For example, the various committees that reported to the Commonwealth Government in the mid 1980s (Goldring, Jackson, Board of Trade), found that international students, especially full-fee students, were likely to be interested in a quite narrow range of vocationally oriented programs such as those in engineering, science, computer studies accounting and commerce. This market orientation might tempt universities to skew their priorities into those directions with a consequent breakdown in the broad, liberal base usually acknowledged as the norm for Australian university study programs. Experiences at the University of New South Wales and Monash University, cited by Hill, had borne out the reality of this risk and it was felt that measures would need to be in place to avoid a similar situation at Murdoch. In reality, it is not apparent that such a selection of courses offerings would represent any
real difference to the usual practices of Australian universities at the time. Their major concern each year was the attraction of as many students as possible onto their campuses so as to maximise their level of funding from the Commonwealth Government. The existence of two universities and several colleges of advanced education in a relatively small city, as well as an increasing tertiary emphasis within the TAFE sector, had already initiated a great deal of competitive marketing, aimed at local students, in the press, the electronic media and in schools. Universities, in the then current economic climate, had already begun to highlight the practical nature of many of their courses as well as their significance for future employment prospects.

It is, of course, absurd to say that universities should take no account of market demand. The already do, constantly. These same areas [of study], for example, are also in great demand amongst Australian students. Moreover, it is standard practice to test every new programme proposal put forward in academic planning against the likely demand for it, in addition to taking other considerations into account. (Murdoch University 1985b)

Of perhaps greater concern was the danger that the quest for student numbers, and the financial advantage to be gained from their enrolment, might lead to a lowering of admission standards and/or the enrolment of students whose English language competency was not at a level suitable to meet the requirements of rigorous study in the University’s academic programs. Evidence was available to the Committee that such lapses in standards had indeed occurred in international universities and, closer to home, in the recruitment of students into programs at the Secondary School level. It would be essential for effective mechanisms to be evolved that would ensure that the integrity of the University was maintained.

An over-large presence of foreign students at Murdoch would also have the potential to create strains on the teaching and learning processes of the University (Murdoch
University 1985b). It was suggested to the Hill Committee that a number of international students would be coming to Australia from educational backgrounds in which critical thinking and independent analysis were not encouraged. This could lead to a great deal of extra work on the part of the teaching staff in order to bring those skills to the levels required to participate in courses that were presented in the more liberal manner that was the norm in Australian universities. This rather stereotypic view of international students, particularly those from South East Asia, was not, in fact, an accurate reflection of the abilities and attitudes of those who would eventually enrol at Murdoch. This aspect is discussed more fully in a later chapter of this study.

After its discussion and analysis of the various aspects outlined above, the Hill Committee decided that, on balance, there were significant advantages to be gained by Murdoch from the enrolment of full-fee paying international students on the existing campus, and that systems could be put in place to deal with the perceived potential problems. The Committee recommended that:

*The university agree to admit full-fee paying overseas students on the condition that such quotas and programme controls are maintained with respect to these students as will preserve the liberal ethos and balance of studies we are striving for on the Murdoch campus.*

(Murdoch University 1985b)

In addition, to obviate the potential for adverse effects on the nature of the education provided at Murdoch, the Committee recommended that such enrolments constitute no more than fifteen percent of total enrolment. Further, because of the financial risks described above, and for humanitarian and political reasons, it recommended that preference be given to taking up the ten percent of enrolment allowed for scholarship
students in the Commonwealth Government’s foreign aid guidelines before enrolling full-fee students.

The Interim Report Of The International Campus Task Force.
The International Campus Task Force presented its *Interim Report* to the University community in December 1985. (Because of developments in early 1986, there would be no final report.) As discussed earlier, the Task Force was composed largely of persons sympathetic towards, and often openly enthusiastic about, the Yanchep Campus proposal. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Task Force recommended that the establishment of a subsidiary campus be supported. This recommendation was made regardless of what appears to have been very substantial opposition on campus and in the face of the opposing recommendation of the Hill Committee. The report acknowledged that the Task Force had encountered a very cautious attitude towards the project on the part of central education authorities, notably CTEC. The report also reflected the same concerns, expressed on campus and by commentators like Stone (1987), that the international campus concept was being driven by political and economic pressures at both State and Commonwealth levels, with little regard to educational issues.

Given that the Yanchep campus proposal was to collapse within weeks of the release of the report of the Task Force, it is the discussion and recommendations within the report in regard to the concept of providing for full-fee international students that are of more interest to this study. Nairn (1992) acknowledged that he knew that the recommendation to proceed with the Yanchep project would not be successful, but said that it had to be put forward to ensure that the debate about the admission of full-
fee students would be complete. The recommendations of the Task Force in regard to full-fee paying international are almost in line with the concepts presented to it by the Hill Committee: full-fee students were to be enrolled at Murdoch university, but were not to exceed fifteen percent of the total student body nor to exceed thirty percent of individual program enrolments. (These restrictions were later ignored, as the quest for greater income from fees intensified.) The first intake of full-fee students was proposed for Semester 2, 1986 on the Murdoch campus (with Yanchep to follow in 1988).

The Hill Committee’s proposal that the University adopt a policy of admitting aided students, up to the ten percent ceiling imposed by the Commonwealth Government, before enrolling full-fee students, was not accepted by the Task Force. This is indicative of a major difference of opinion between the two committees. The Hill Committee implied that the level of fees paid by students should recoup only the full cost of their instruction: “We suggest that it would be ethically unacceptable for public institutions to seek to make significant excess profits at this point” (Murdoch University 1985b). The Task Force’s position was that the fees could possibly assist in the amelioration of the University’s on-going financial problems: “The Task Force is of the view that the University should seek a net financial return from full-fee overseas student operations. The purpose of the financial return would be to further expand and upgrade the facilities and staffing of the University” (Murdoch University 1985b). Such profits would be considerably reduced if too many places were to be filled by aided students! And, regardless of philosophical concerns, the placement of aided students was under the control of CTEC, whereas the University could determine how many full-fee students it would accept.
Members of the Task Force were aware that the profits gained from the enterprise would potentially bring some dangers with them. The greatest of these was that the Commonwealth Government, through CTEC, would offset the profits gained from fees by reducing the level of grants to the University. In its discussion of this problem, the Task Force makes the point that universities receiving monies from endowments and other sources did not suffer such reductions. Why, then, should those who had accepted Dawkin’s challenge to be entrepreneurial be penalised for their endeavour? Nevertheless, as a safeguard, the Task Force recommended that:

“The University and the State Government together seek assurances from CTEC that any financial or other benefits obtained by Murdoch from fee paying operations will not be offset by reductions in capital or recurrent grants for the Murdoch Campus” (Murdoch University 1985b). Some years later, both Nairn (1992) and Dunn (1992) expressed concern that this was still an option for a future government with budget problems, but acknowledged that it had not been a problem up to that time.

The Hill Committee recommendations did not place any restrictions on the levels of enrolment in particular programs and, given the generally cautious approach to the whole full-fee concept expressed in the Hill Report, and on campus in general, the figure of thirty percent, recommended by the Task Force, seems high and probably reflects the greater level of enthusiasm of the Task Force membership for the fee-paying concept. In partial justification of the apparently high level, the Task Force noted that the Commerce program at Murdoch already had a twenty-six percent international enrolment, and that some other universities had programs with enrolment levels of forty percent or more of international students.
In the discussion within its *Interim Report*, the Task Force sought to allay the many concerns that had been expressed by members of the Murdoch community. Educational concerns were, of course, considered to be of prime importance. The report made it clear that: “The primary objective of the arrangement should be the provision of high quality education” (Recommendation 2) and that the admission of full-fee paying international students would be dependant on their ability to meet “normal academic standards for entry” (Recommendation 1). In the preamble to this latter recommendation, it was also stated that prospective students must display a satisfactory standard of mastery of English and it was proposed that facilities be established to enable students to further enhance their proficiency in that area.

The Task Force also responded to the concerns expressed by several individuals and groups that the university would skew its offerings towards vocationally oriented courses in an attempt to attract full-fee students. The Task Force report said:

> *Most Australian universities are ignorant of the mix at their institution and that this aspect of their development is unplanned. They appear to develop towards a full range of courses at a rate that funds permit and in a pattern that is determined by government policy, and staff preferences and student demand.*

(Murdoch University 1985b)

Further, the report asserted, some universities appeared to tolerate up to 80% of their courses being “vocational” without obvious ill effects. Thus, an institution would not necessarily need to have a “liberal arts” structure to be academically viable. In a note of caution, or perhaps to reassure staff with more traditional philosophies, the Task Force recommended that programs should be structured so as to include non-vocational electives in all courses.
Concerns were expressed on campus, and in the literature, about the potential for the lowering of entry and assessment standards in order to attract students to the University. The Task Force proposed what appears to be a very realistic approach to these problems. In the first instance, they asserted, a system in which resources were provided on the basis of student numbers, already encouraged Australian universities to lower standards in order to maintain income levels. There were, however, counter pressures that would come to bear in a manner that tended towards the maintenance of high academic standards to encourage the enrolment of high quality students and the development of research programs and sponsorship. Finally, the report stated, the standards set and maintained within a university were dependent upon the quality and integrity of the academic staff. To reinforce and strengthen the influence of staff in this regard, the report proposed the establishment of a Committee on Overseas Student Policy, under the auspices of Academic Council to monitor such matters as admission and assessment standards, course content, staffing standards and conditions of employment.

In addition to the provision of educational services at the Murdoch campus, it was recommended that Murdoch (and Yanchep) provide courses in an external mode through Disted Services, Malaysia. There was also provision for sufficient flexibility of program design for students to complete their qualification through study at more than one campus/institution. The development of these options is discussed later in this study.
WAIT Enters The Picture

In February 1986, a major obstacle to Murdoch’s involvement in the project arose. It was revealed that while the Murdoch Task Force had been involved in the negotiations with its supposed partners EXIM and Sun City, they had been secretly taking part in discussions with the Western Australian Institute of Technology (WAIT) about the possibility of that institution assuming the role as the supplier of educational programs for the Yanchep project. EXIM is reported to have asked WAIT to join them in the feasibility study because the strong campaign mounted by the Murdoch University Staff Association had put Murdoch University’s participation in doubt (Acott 1986a). In this same article, Minister Pearce was reported to have said that EXIM did not want to be in the position of not having a partner for Sun City should Murdoch ‘pull out’. If WAIT were part of the feasibility study, he said, it would be better placed to take over. In a later report, Pearce revealed that the negotiations with WAIT had been going on “for some time” (Newman 1986).

WAIT was a much larger institution than Murdoch and, because of its status as a College of Advanced Education, with a much smaller commitment to research than Murdoch, it would probably be able to offer courses with considerably lower fees. Further, without the restrictions placed on universities, WAIT was already experienced in marketing its courses into Asia and was much better known in those countries than Murdoch University. The Director of WAIT, Dr Don Watts, said that the still incomplete feasibility study was WAIT’s only involvement with the project at that time. He said that there could be a “happy marriage” between WAIT’s clear ideas about international students and the opportunity for the institution to gain access to capital for expansion in the area of provision for those students.
At around that time, it also became public knowledge that negotiations were almost complete to upgrade the status of WAIT to that of a University of Technology, thus overcoming Murdoch’s advantage as a formally recognised university. There were accusations that Pearce had negotiated with Watts, offering university status for WAIT in return for participation in the Yanchep proposal (Smart 1986a, White 1996). However, White, in his history of WAIT/Curtin, expressed the belief that:

*Independently, although inevitably caught up in the associated controversies of the Yanchep proposals, Pearce, in January 1986, informally raised with State Cabinet the possibility if WA conferring university status on WAIT. The initiative was very much his own, for neither Watts nor the senior WAIT personnel knew about the move until it was announced some months later.*

(White 1996)

Pearce personally denied any form of collusion on the matter claiming that: “I have had formal discussions with WAIT and others about a change of status over two years - starting well before the Yanchep proposal was made”. Pearce is supported in this claim by the President of the WAIT Academic Staff Association: “As an observer on WAIT Council, I know that the Minister suggested university status for WAIT long before Yanchep was on WAIT’s agenda” (Yorke 1986). In spite of the fact that such earlier discussions had taken place, the timing of the announcement was, nevertheless, suggestive of a settlement between the parties.

The high level of opposition to the proposal on the Murdoch campus, especially by the academic and staff unions, would also have indicated to Sun City and EXIM that the likelihood of establishing the international campus through Murdoch had been greatly diminished. All of these factors had contributed to WAIT becoming a far more attractive potential partner than Murdoch. This was especially true in the case of Tokyu/Sun City for whom the reduced cost factors would have made it less likely that any underwriting of recurrent costs would occur.
The Task Force and the Murdoch Senate accepted the reality that their institution had been relegated to the status of “second best” and resolved to withdraw from the project (Murdoch University 1986b). At that stage, the significant division of opinion between groups of staff was still clear:

Several members expressed their regret that the University should withdraw from what they saw as an enterprise which had fired the public imagination, while others saw it as a necessary and perhaps desirable outcome of a matter which had become somewhat divisive.

In a public statement, the Senate said that it had decided not to proceed because there was some doubt as to whether the scheme would be considered to be within established Commonwealth guidelines for fee-paying international students (Ryan’s opposition) and that cost competitiveness and competing demands for the University’s limited resources were other factors in the decision to withdraw (Newman 1986). Education Minister Pearce, in his characteristic forthright manner, completed his dismissal of Murdoch University as a contender, stating that the withdrawal was a mere formality as Murdoch had effectively been ‘dumped’ by Sun City anyway. He said that Murdoch had too narrow a range of courses, there was too much staff opposition to the proposal and, not only were its degrees not recognised in Malaysia, but there was also difficulty in obtaining that recognition from the Malaysian Government. It should be noted that this was, in fact, not true because recognition of Murdoch University degrees had been granted by the Malaysian Government in 1985. In spite of confirmation of this recognition by Senator Ryan, Pearce refused to withdraw his statement (Acott 1986a). In yet another interview, Pearce asserted that he had always thought that WAIT would be the best institution to control the academic side of the Yanchep campus (Acott 1986b). (In late 1986 WAIT was, in fact, elevated to university status as Curtin University of Technology and, as such, became a major competitor to Murdoch for both local and international students.)
There were some further bitter exchanges in the press between Vice-Chancellor Boyce and Minister Pearce, but they were of no real significance to the future of the Yanchep campus proposal. Not long after Murdoch’s withdrawal from the feasibility study, Tokyu’s concern about the size of its potential financial commitment, and a breakdown in negotiations with WAIT, led to the whole concept being abandoned. It was to be nearly twenty years before Tokyu and the Gallop State Government agreed on a major developmental thrust into the Yanchep area. Strong population growth and demand for housing lots in Perth’s far northern suburbs had enhanced the feasibility of the planning for a semi-autonomous satellite city in the area. Ironically, the university campus planned as part of the development was to be an extension of neither Curtin nor Murdoch, but of Edith Cowan the state’s newest university (The West Australian 2004).

The Decision
The opportunity given to universities to enrol full-fee paying international students and the subsequent proposal for the international campus at Yanchep, gave rise to a widespread and sometimes bitter debate at Murdoch University. The report of the International Campus Task Force, which very strongly favoured both concepts, was tempered by that of the Hill Committee, which took into account the views of a wider cross-section of the campus population. As it eventuated, a formal decision on the proposal for the establishment of an International Campus at Yanchep became unnecessary because of the University’s withdrawal from the feasibility study. The debate engendered by the proposal had, however, brought the issue of full-fee paying international students very much to the attention of the whole campus and had
revealed a significant level of support for the concept - though this was somewhat hesitant at first.

In December 1985, Academic Council resolved:

(a) to RECOMMEND the acceptance of the principle of the enrolment at the University of full-fee paying overseas students subject to

i) such students meeting the normal academic standards required for admission and graduation;

ii) limits on the enrolment of overseas students in programmes and courses being established and monitored on a regular basis by the Academic Council;

iii) preference being given to the enrolment of aided students;

iv) existing CTEC guidelines being adhered to;

v) fees charged being sufficient to meet all additional costs for tuition, support services, administration and physical facilities arising from such enrolments and that the meeting of these costs be the first charge on these funds, and

vi no full-fee course enrolments directly or indirectly excluding or displacing an Australian or aided overseas student.

(b) that the acceptance by the Council of the principle of full-fee paying overseas students should not be interpreted in any way as a reduction of its support for the policy of Australian students not being charged tuition fees.

In reporting this resolution to the Senate, the Academic Council noted that it had been passed without dissent. This was an important turning point in the process because it meant that the University could now proceed with the task of formulating the policies that would govern the enterprise. After some discussion, the Senate clarified its understanding of “normal academic standards”, taking it to mean some equivalence to those demonstrated by students from local secondary schools; and that it could also mean that enrolment in English as a second language courses might be required. It was also noted in the Senate that Murdoch was one of the first Australian universities to decide to take advantage of the new Commonwealth policy. With this in mind, the Senate accepted the recommendation of the Academic Council. The Vice-Chancellor
immediately set up a working party to formulate and recommend to the Senate, the policies and procedures under which a pilot program for full-fee paying international students might operated from first semester in 1987 (Murdoch University 1986b).

It is notable that a number of Australian universities, faced with the same decision at about the same time as Murdoch, had decided not to become involved. In June 1986, The Australian newspaper reported that La Trobe University had:

Followed the precedent set by Macquarie and voted against privatisation.
A motion passed by the Council 12 votes to six, with three abstentions, said the University would not participate in any way in full-fee paying courses for private overseas students. (Howard 1986)

The Working Party On Overseas Students

This working party consisted, in fact, of the members of the International Campus Task Force with Nairn as chair. As had been the case with the International Campus Task Force and the Hill Committee, this working party was directly appointed by Boyce. The Working Party was given wide terms of reference asking it to consider, and prepare a report on, all aspects of a possible pilot program, including:

- The courses to be offered, including external studies, appropriate fees for them and the submission of that information to CTEC for approval,
- Marketing and recruitment of students,
- Admission and enrolment procedures, including English screening,
- Support services that might be required, including ESL support, and
- The provision of on-campus accommodation.

The Working Party was given three months in which to prepare a case for presentation to the Academic Council and the Senate. In line with the shift of influence in policy-making from representative groups to the senior executive level, however, the group
saw itself as “an advisory committee to the Vice-Chancellor”. The Working Party certainly acted as a semi-autonomous body once policy development was completed and the tasks of recruiting and enrolling students began. The activities of the group were reported regularly to the Senate and Academic Council by the Vice-Chancellor, but there are no records in the minutes of those meetings of real discussion of them or of resolutions to approve the Working Party’s actions. By 1989, the Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor J. Loneragan, had no doubt at all about the status of the group. In a letter announcing the amalgamation of the Working Party with the Committee on Overseas Relations, he referred to them as the committees “advisory to the Vice-Chancellor on international matters”. As had by then become standard practice, the new, smaller International Affairs Committee was established and the members appointed by the (Acting) Vice-Chancellor (Loneragan 1986).

The members of the Working Party demonstrated very strong commitment to the goal of enrolling significant numbers of full-fee paying international students at Murdoch University. At their first meeting, they agreed that their work on the Working Party, at least initially, would be: “A voluntary addition to other duties” (Murdoch University 1986c). They had not even completely given up on the Yanchep project:

*It was agreed that some exchange of information acquired for the Yanchep feasibility study could occur with WAIT. It was felt that co-operation between all Western Australian institutions would be desirable in future marketing arrangements for full-fee overseas students, and there may still be a possibility for some Murdoch participation in a Yanchep Campus.*

(Murdoch University 1986c)

(As will be seen, this rather collegial spirit between the institutions was to quickly dissipate in the competitive reality of the marketplace for student enrolments.) According to the report of the Working Party, its members consulted widely with Deans and Program Chairs as to the possible programs that could be included in the
proposed pilot program. It is noteworthy that this represented a significant change from the “deep” consultation process that was espoused in the Murdoch Ethos and practised earlier in the University’s history. In this case the consultation was with only those in positions of traditional authority within the University and further demonstrates the previously noted movement towards the central consolidation of decision-making at Murdoch University. Harman and Gawthorn, who conferred with the Deans and Program Chairs, were met with a very cautious response; most people wanting more information about the resource/income balance before committing themselves. Harman reported most interest from Professor Alan Davison, the Chair of Commerce, and from Psychology (Murdoch University 1986d). Gawthorn advised the group that Science and Mathematics were somewhat more hesitant about becoming involved. He reported that these areas had said that “maybe” they could participate with “small offerings” of places (Murdoch University 1986e).

There were also discussions with various groups outside the University. Dunn (1992) said that he had travelled to Canberra to consult with bodies such as CTEC and the Council for Overseas Students and had found the various Commonwealth officials less than enthusiastic, their preferred option being the provision of education services in the overseas countries rather than bringing students to Australia. There was, however, no official objection to Murdoch initiating its program. Courses to be offered on a full-fee basis would have to be approved by CTEC, which would also examine and approve the costings and fees for the courses. As it eventuated, there were no significant problems with gaining approval from CTEC, with Nairn finding himself quite well received in Canberra during his discussions that led to the granting of final approval (Nairn 1992, Murdoch University 1986f).
Concern about the financial situation of the University had been a strong motivating force from the very beginning of discussions about full-fee paying international students. Early in its considerations, the Working Party on Overseas Students decided to recommend to the Academic Council that a profit margin be set initially at ten percent above all costs, with the longer-term profit level to be five to ten percent. It was also decided that the pricing of individual programs be flexible, “To allow cross subsidies and responsiveness to market demand” (Murdoch University 1986g). Dr Bloom (1992) said that he had opposed, and still disapproved of, the idea of cross-subsidisation between programs, branding the process as unethical. However, the drive to enrol students and to enhance the flow of funding to the University had sidelined such concerns.

In June 1986 the Working Party completed its initial tasks and reported to the Academic Council and the Senate. The very thorough report included recommendations in many areas. Only the material dealing with the Academic Plan and the Admissions Policy are considered in this chapter. Other recommendations and supporting material related to marketing, recruiting and the provision of student services are discussed later, in chapters dealing with those issues. It was envisaged that thirty places would be offered in each of Commerce, Economics and Computer Science with a further thirty places in total to be offered in the Mathematics and Science area. Eight postgraduate places would be offered: four in the M Ed and four in M App Psych programs. There was recognition that international students already studying in Western Australian secondary schools for their Tertiary Entrance Examinations might wish to choose other courses of study, and sufficient flexibility
was built in to allow for that eventuality. Proposed fees for the programs ranged from $6000 for Commerce to $13000 in the Sciences. The proposed profit margin was to be ten to fifteen percent, a substantial increase on the levels initially contemplated by the Working Party. A very important policy initiative was that a proportion of the profit should be distributed to those Schools of Study that were directly involved in the provision of education services to full-fee students. As it transpired, policy guidelines were created that distributed some of the profits to all areas within the University: “To demonstrate the benefits of full-fee students” (Dunn 1992). Eventually, however, the greatest financial benefit would accrue to the areas that offered programs to the international students. Davison (1992) said that Commerce courses were high on the preferred list for the students and he had wanted his department to benefit from the substantial financial rewards available. He had become heavily involved in the recruitment program because of this. The policy would continue to act as a strong incentive for Deans and Program Chairs to offer places in their courses and to enhance their programs to make them more attractive to international students.

The Report Of The Working Party On Overseas Students - Admissions Policy
One of the strongest objections to the notion of full-fee paying international students was that standards would be lowered so that sufficient numbers of students could be enrolled to make recruitment programs financially viable. It was essential that the Murdoch policy-makers ensured that this was not the outcome at their university. It was decided that eligibility would be determined in accordance with the University’s existing admissions policies. That is, there would be no special arrangements for full-fee paying international students. They would have to meet the same selection criteria
as all other students. It would be the responsibility of the Admissions Office to keep their tables of qualifications deemed to be equivalent to the Western Australian Tertiary Admissions Examinations up-to-date and to apply them so as: “To ensure that the minimum qualifications of FFP students are equivalent to those of other students” (Murdoch University 1986h). Osborne (1992) said that this had been a difficult task, but well worth the effort. Because of the excellent database thus produced, Murdoch had been able to be meticulous in its selection processes.

Academic Council resolved to accept the recommendations of the Working Party on Overseas Students and no significant problems were raised or discussed at the meeting at which this momentous decision was taken (Murdoch University 1986h). Members of the Senate, however, were still doubtful about the proposal. There were expressions of concern about:

- the possible effects on other students, including subsidised international students,
- the recommendation that twenty places in Student House be reserved for the full-fee international students,
- the possible effects of privatisation on tertiary education in general and on the generation of new pressures for the imposition of fees on Australian students and,
- the exact meaning of the term ‘pilot program’ and how such a program and its effects on the University might be monitored.

Boyce assured the Senate that the pilot program was to be a small-scale operation to test both the financial viability and the effects of the program on the University. He undertook to monitor the pilot with the assistance of the Working Party on Overseas
Students and to report back to the Senate on a regular basis. He pointed out that the University could still continue to enrol the number of subsidised students allowed to it by CTEC. Those students would almost certainly benefit from the extra on-campus services that would be available due to the inclusion of the cost of increasing support services in the proposed fee structure. All students would eventually benefit from the presence of the full-fee paying international students in the Student House, because they were required, under CTEC guidelines, to pay a higher rate for their accommodation, producing surplus funds for extensions and improvements in on-campus student accommodation.

In supporting the recommendation for the pilot program, Boyce again demonstrated his belief that it was the financial advantages to the University that were the most important aspect of the proposal. He noted that the Finance and Staffing Committee had advised that the risks of undertaking the program were “acceptable”, and then he:

Pointed out that the University's funding level through CTEC had already been constrained and was likely to be more severely limited in the present economic climate, although the University was simultaneously being encouraged to expand. The University must get more money to develop as it wished and universities generally were being encouraged by the Government to look to other sources of revenue, including the acceptance of full-fee paying students. (Murdoch University 1986i)

Nowhere else is it made clearer that Boyce saw this funding source as a major factor in ensuring the future of Murdoch University.

Further evidence of the financial imperative and the gradually increasing effect of globalisation and corporatism in driving the decision-making processes is revealed by the release by the Working Party on Overseas Students of a “Corporate Strategy” for the full-fee program. The first tenet of this strategy was: “To generate income for the
University” and, regardless of the fact that this was supposed to be a pilot program, the second was that; “The University accepts a long-term academic and financial commitment to the program”. In what Marginson and Considine (2000) called an “imitation ritual”, the Strategy mirrors internally the external pressure on the University to generate new income, in its inclusion of a statement that: “The University acknowledges the need for financial incentives to School/Programmes offering courses to full-fee students”. Thus the global forces that had produced the need for universities to compete for resources were brought to bear on the University’s departments.

Having gained the approval of the Vice-Chancellor and the University community, the Working Party on Overseas students was then free to begin the conversion of its plans into actions that would bring about the enrolment of the first full-fee paying international students in 1987. We turn now to an examination of those processes.
CHAPTER FIVE: MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT

With the basic policy decision having been made to enrol full-fee paying international students, and guidelines in having been put in place for enacting the policy, the task of selling places at Murdoch began in earnest. This chapter examines the continuation of the development of policies and the establishment of contingent processes for marketing Murdoch and its courses to international students. The chapter begins with a review of the relevant literature on the marketing of education services to international students, their parents and even to the governments of the countries from which customer students would come. This review is followed by an examination of the decisions that were made about the marketing tools to be used, and the ways in which they were applied at Murdoch University. Particular attention is given to: market research, Australian trade agencies and their use by Murdoch, marketing via the media, the use of local agents, and personal contact with students and institutions in the target countries. There is also discussion of the strategic policy decisions to use some less direct marketing techniques such as: twinning, the granting of scholarships, and international exchange and “Study Abroad” programs.

Early Mistakes

There is very strong consensus in the literature that the earliest marketing efforts of Australian universities left much to be desired. Australia was part of a general rush by educational institutions to Asia in the 1980s. Dhanarajan (1987) reported that:

In the year 1986, no less than 79 recruitment missions of schools, colleges and universities came to Malaysia. In addition to these, there were about 45 legally established student placement centres and perhaps as many illegal ones doing year-round recruitment. Up to 1986 there were more than 580 local and private educational establishments offering a diversity of post-secondary education.
In Australia’s case, according to Marginson (1993): “Overseas marketing has sometimes neglected educational values and quality service, and this has generated resentment in South East Asia”. Professor Stephen Fitzgerald was reported to have said that universities, like other businesses, went to Asia for: “The short haul, the quick return and profit jackpot” (Chong 1993). Fitzgerald asserted that the type of aggressive, profit-seeking behaviour displayed the universities: “Established a fine reputation for Australian universities as the carpetbaggers, the gold diggers, the mercenaries of education, a reputation which was only with great difficulty brought under control at the end of the decade”. Similar concerns are reported in a survey of the Singaporean market by Smart and Ang (1992), in which they reported that Australian had a ‘damaged reputation’ and said that: “Some Singaporeans have described the sale of Australian education to Singaporean students as a money-making racket”. Nicholls (1987) warned of the emergence of significant image problems in Malaysia, in reaction to the aggressive marketing approaches adopted by Australian universities in that country. She claimed that the problem was often exacerbated by the involvement of people without educational credentials:

Senior officials from several South Eastern Asian countries have expressed concern about the ‘hard-sell’ attitude and about the prominence of trade officials in the exercise, in contrast to the more educational and culturally acceptable approach of the UK which operates through the British Council, and the USA through its Information Service. (Davis 1989)

An interesting counter view was presented by Milne (1994), who expressed the belief that there were a lot of ‘myths’ about the over-aggressive marketing by Australian institutions. She claimed that the methods being used were no different to those used by the UK and the USA. According to Milne, the leaders of those countries unsympathetic towards Australia often encouraged belief in those myths for their own political ends. One such motivation, according to Nesdale et al. (1995) was alarm
about the high level of subsequent immigration of students back to Australia after the completion of their studies.

There were grave concerns in official circles about the damage being done to Australia’s reputation as a supplier of education services. In 1988, the Australian Education Council issued a *Code Of Conduct For The Overseas Marketing Of Australia's Educational Services*. A key commitment of the Code stated:

> Institutions will market their educational product with integrity, accuracy and professionalism. These activities will be consistent with the educational, cultural and regulatory systems of the countries in which institutions seek to market and will not detract from the reputation and interests of other Australian institutions.

In 1994, the Australian Vice-Chancellors’ Committee, in a similar ‘code’ found that it was still necessary to warn institutions against:

- Arriving in countries without the appropriate clearances from foreign governments and Australian Diplomatic Missions,
- Dishonest, promotion and advertising, and
- Unfair, misleading and malicious comparisons with other institutions.

**Marketing Strategies**

The marketing strategies of Australian universities have been widely criticised as being too narrowly based. Jandy Godfrey of IDP said that, in the early days: “Marketing involved putting an advertisement in a foreign newspaper and waiting to see what happened” (Cave 2001). Marginson (1997) described the approach as being more about image than the provision of good educational choices for students. Marshall (1993) stated the belief that, even at that stage, the administrators of universities did not understand the real meaning and importance of ‘marketing’,
seeing only the possibility of gaining dollars. He said that the institutions had
devoted all of their efforts to promotion and selling, while neglecting other aspects of
the marketing process such as research, product development and support services.
Hughes (1988) claimed that much of the success of Australian universities had, in
fact, little to do with marketing:

_The growth of foreign student numbers in Australian post-secondary
institutions has little to do with the rationality of either demand or supply. The
demand for Australian education has been heavily influenced by national
Malaysian and Indonesian policies that discriminate against students of
Chinese origin._

Most of the promotional material used by Australian universities concentrated on
aspects other than the quality of the educational services to be provided. A study
carried out on behalf of the Western Australian State Government reported that:
“Australia’s market position is dependant more on geographical proximity to South
East Asian markets, liberal work rights under visas, low crime rates and a relaxed
lifestyle, than the quality of our institutions” (Government of Western Australia
1995). Dwyer (1992) wrote of an urgent need for the promotion of Australia as a
quality destination for education services rather than continued reliance on factors
such as proximity to attract enrolments from the target countries. That such factors
were the main ones that were emphasised is perhaps not really surprising, given that
they were often the ones recommended to universities by both official and other
sources in Australia. For example, the Australian Trade Commission (1989) listed
Australia’s marketing advantages as: proximity, climate, cheaper living costs, good
image, part-time work availability, visas for spouses, low crime rate, availability of
summer courses, a simple visa process, and the fact that information was readily
available through the Australian Education Centres. A similar stance was taken in
Western Australia as late as 1995:
When the factors of proximity to Perth of Singapore and Malaysia, a temperate climate, same time zone, readily available direct or near direct airline flights, favourable cost of living bills, high quality national and international telephone networks are combined with the provision of a quality service at a competitive price, there is a strong likelihood of attracting students to Western Australia. (Government of Western Australia 1995)

Promotional Tools

The list of methods of promotion used by Australian universities appeared to be quite uniform across the institutions. The most commonly used techniques were:

- Advertising in the print and electronic media.
- Exhibitions and roadshows.
- Visits to institutions.
- Alumni networks.
- Representative agents.
- Government and other Australian agencies.
- Partnerships with local universities (twinning).

Advertising

Advertising in foreign newspapers and on television is a very expensive exercise that needs careful targeting (AUSTRADE 1989, Humfrey 1999, Knapp 2002). While all of Australia’s universities have used the media to promote their offerings to international students, there has been little research as to the efficacy of this, or indeed any other, promotional strategy (Mazzarol and Hine 1996, Mazzarol 1998). One of the few surveys of international students that had been undertaken in the early 1990s reported that only three to eight percent of respondents (depending on the type of institution) had said that mass media had been their main source of information (Harris and Rhall 1993). The plethora of advertising in the pages of English language
newspapers in South East Asia certainly makes one wonder how students could possibly distinguish the offerings of one institution from another.

Personal Contact
Exhibitions, roadshows and visits to institutions (particularly secondary schools) are all occasions for personal contact between representatives of the universities and their potential students. Humfrey (1999) expressed the belief that this type of promotion was: “Still the best marketing tool”. He advised institutions to have plenty of high-quality promotional materials ready for distribution by active, enthusiastic staff. Humfrey said that the ethos of an institution might well be judged by the behaviour of staff at an exhibition stand. A team dressed in recognisable university clothing, actively distributing material and answering questions, was more likely to leave a lasting impression than an individual reading a magazine behind a table full of brochures. Mazzarol (1994) found that there was much disagreement among Western Australian universities as to the value of these “personal contact” types of promotions (Government of Western Australia 1995). This, again, was probably due to the lack of real research data pertaining to the numbers of students recruited as consequence of the use of particular marketing methods.

Alumni
The use of alumni networks for promotion was recognised as an important strategy as early as in 1985:

_The associations of local Australia alumni were seen to be quite strong. This could provide a high profile presence for the exploration and promotion of any courses offered in Singapore. Furthermore, real advantages could result from strengthening relationships and information flows with these alumni to heighten general awareness among the local community of Australia as a country and provider of educational services._ (Comm of Australia 1985a)
Murphy (1987), writing of the Hong Kong market, emphasised that good reports from graduates were all-important in a market in which: “An established reputation counts for a lot more than flashy advertising”. Souter et al (1996) also stressed the importance of favourable word-of-mouth referrals, and Humfrey (1999) advised that alumni should be invited to join university staff in exhibition stands because of the obvious benefits to be gained from the presence of: “Articulate, satisfied past students”. Marsh (2003) also rated the use of the influence of alumni as potentially the most important of the marketing tools: “Many of the graduates of the 1950s and 1960s are now in senior positions in government and commerce and that has been great for the profile of Australian education in Asia and for Australia as a whole”.

Agents

The use of representative agents to recruit international students was described by Humfrey (1999) as: “One of the most hotly debated marketing issues that international recruiters face”. Belcher (1987) warned that some agents who had been rejected as unsatisfactory by universities from the UK and USA were succeeding in gaining business from Australian Universities. The Australian Education Council (1988) also expressed concern about the use of agents, urging universities to carefully check the credentials and business standing of prospective representatives. Writing in a similarly cautious tone of the possible dangers of using agents, Davis (1989) said:

Many of them are reputable, but some have given Australia and its institutions a bad name through unethical practices, including overcharging and false advertising and through their using the student visa route as a means of encouraging illegal migration entry to Australia.

In spite of these misgivings, most universities saw the use of agents as a: “Logical requirement for successful overseas sales” (Humfrey 1999), because they maintained
a permanent presence for the institution in the target country far more cost-effectively than constantly sending staff from Australia. Also, Humfrey maintained, students often appreciated the opportunity of: “Being able to talk to well-briefed compatriots in his or her own language in an office a couple of miles from home with immediate access to the principal for faxing applications and responses”. Agents could become successful partners provided that: “Sufficient time, effort, patience and resources were put into managing them” (Humfrey 1999). Other writers, including Smart and Ang (1992) and Nesdale et al (1995) also supported the practice of using agents.

The wide variance of opinion about their value of agents was most probably due, once again, to the lack of access of institutions to reliable research data. One study was reported to have found that twenty-nine percent of international students consulted agents and that twenty percent had relied heavily on their advice, while another study had found that as many as fifty percent had used agents (Mazzarol 1998). Nesdale et al (1998) claimed that research had shown agents to be the most widely used source of information, while Harris (1998) found that agents generated about thirty percent of Australian international student enrolments. In spite of these findings, or possibly unaware of them more than half of the Western Australian institutions surveyed by Mazzarol and Hosie (1996) considered private agents to be: “Of little value”.

The Use Of Government And Other Agencies

As part of the general rush to do business with the developing South East Asian nations in the 1980s, both government and private bodies set up agencies to represent the interests of Australian businesses, including educational institutions, in those countries. For example, the Commonwealth Government set up AUSTRADE and the
Western Australian Government created the EXIM Corporation. Australia’s universities had set up their own international body, the International Development Program of Australian Universities and Colleges (IDP) in 1969 with the purpose of providing assistance to education systems in developing countries and supplying information on courses being offered in Australia. In the new entrepreneurial atmosphere of the mid 1980s, IDP took on a more market-oriented role in its participation in the first ASEAN Science and Technology Week in Malaysia in April 1986 (Davis 1989). While there was some concern about the emphasis on ‘trade’ rather than education within these bodies, Davis (1989) stated that:

*It has become clear that, although there is a definite advantage for institutions to represent themselves overseas, there is a crucial role for an organisation which can provide objective comprehensive and reliable information on Australian education as a whole.*

The Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) (1992) took a similar stance in stating its belief that, while the primary responsibility for marketing lay with individual providers in competition with others, a degree of coordination was also desirable. DEET suggested wider and better use of the Australian Education Centres provided by IDP as well as using AUSTRADE facilities, Australia’s diplomatic posts, State Government authorities and industry representatives. Marshall and Smart (1991) suggested that DEET itself should play a greatly increased role in encouraging better co-ordination, perhaps even to the extent of establishing a new peak body to oversee the whole process of the international marketing of education services. They also saw a role for the State Governments to promote more cooperation between institutions, because: “For efficiency it would appear to be sensible for co-operation rather than competition to be the emphasis in breaking into new markets”.

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AUSTRADE representatives in Indonesia found that the most successful marketing that had taken place in that country had been through the workshops that it had coordinated on a cross-institutional basis (Australian Trade Commission 1989). Milne (1994) attributed much of the improvement in Australia’s marketing approach, that was apparent by the end of the 1980s, to the better coordination of efforts that had resulted from wider use of representative bodies. However, as was the case with most of the marketing strategies, Mazzarol (1998) found that: “The effectiveness of government information centres was difficult to gauge”. Mazzarol discovered that, while many students and institutions reported that these bodies had had little effect on recruitment, a DEET study in 1993 had found that they were very important, professionally run bodies that distributed information to a “substantial number” of students each year.

Using Partner Institutions

Many Australian universities developed relationships with overseas institutions as part of their marketing strategy. In particular, they became involved in the type of arrangement commonly referred to as ‘twinning’. This type of inter-institutional partnership involves students in programs in which the first (and sometimes the second) year of a degree is taken in a university in their home country, with subsequent years completed in ‘twin’ university in a foreign country such as Australia. Much of the early impetus for this type of arrangement was generated by the Malaysian Government in the middle of the 1980s. At that stage, nearly sixty thousand Malaysian students were studying at overseas universities (Selvarajah 1988). Retaining at least a proportion of those students in Malaysia for the first year of their studies had important advantages from the Malaysian Government’s point of view.
Economically, the outflow of foreign capital would be reduced by one-third. Culturally, students would have an extra year of maturity before travelling overseas. Academically, the first year of the course would be able to contain materials more relevant to the Malaysian situation, and the retention of the students would contribute to the growth of the local university system (Smart 1988, Selvarajah 1988, Tan 2001). The practice of twinning, and the formation of other types of partnerships, became widespread, so that by 1993 there were more than twelve hundred formal links between Australian and overseas universities (Saffu and Mamman 1999). A study by Asian Business in 1996 described the ‘boom’ in university twinning across Asia:

Neil Maynard, director of education at the Hong Kong Office of the British Council, estimates the number of British universities offering one or more degrees through Asian partner institutions has exploded from 10 to 50 in the past five years. Research from Australia shows schools there have also caught the twinning fever, and North American schools are now joining the move East.

Towards Better Practice

In a very detailed coverage of the whole process of marketing educational services, Gibbs and Knapp (2002) emphasised the need for a “complete marketing process” not just the promotion of the institution. By using such a process, they argued, institutions would learn to: “Understand who are their customers, what are their needs and how the institution needs to adapt, develop and meet those needs.” They set out five phases of the marketing process and advised institutions to pay careful attention to all of them. These phases can be summarised as:

- Research - both of the market and the needs of the students, their families and their home countries.
- Segmentation - ‘taking a position’ and seeking differentiation from other institutions to gain a competitive advantage.
- Development - What courses will we offer? What special courses can we produce for this market?
- Pricing - taking into account promotion, delivery and extra services, producing a competitive fee structure.
- Promotion - develop a brand. Concentrate on good public relations with students, institutions and officials in the target countries.

Gibbs and Knapp’s text offered comprehensive advice and details of each stage of the marketing process. It was, of course, a recent publication and, as such, represented an accumulation of what the authors saw as proven ‘best practice’ over many years of marketing experience. It should be noted, however, that similar material was readily available to Australian universities during the early days of their attempts to market their education services into South East Asia. For example, Castling (1984) spoke of the need for universities: “to positively identify their prospective customers and their needs; to clearly explain what they had to offer; to negotiate new courses (or patterns of courses); and to check with current students that they were getting what they thought they would get”. Similarly, a good deal of marketing ‘advice’ was available from sources such as Belcher (1987), Kinnell (1989, 1990) and Wade (1990).

A number of researchers over the years have highlighted an almost complete lack of reliable research data on the efficacy of various marketing methods, and have called for a greater emphasis on the gathering of relevant information about markets and students (Marshall and Smart 1991, Smart and Ang 1992). Several Australian researchers have contended that there has continued to be a lack of quality research into the marketing process in Australia. They have highlighted, in particular, the need for universities to have access to better data when considering changes and
improvements to their marketing programs (Mazzarol 1994, Mazzarol and Hosie 1996, Souter and Turner 2002).

By the late 1990s and early 2000s there were indications that some improvements had occurred. Mazzarol (1996) stated that the emerging practice by which institutions strove to differentiate themselves from alternative suppliers would be increasingly important in the further development of international competitiveness. Cave (2001) reported that universities were: “Doing more research, targeting more wisely, using relationships more”. Marginson (2002) said that in the period from 1986: “There has been immense growth in professionalism of functions such as marketing and recruitment”.

Despite this optimism, there was still frequent criticism - particularly about quality issues. For example, Powell (1994) expressed concern that the USA, UK and Canada had developed a stronger reputation for quality than had Australia. He said that: “The over concern of Australian institutions in gaining numbers has done little to present the Australian education system as one of quality”. The same reporter, in an article about Monash University, attributed the success of that University, as “the leading provider of places”, to its attention to the finer points of marketing, including the development of quality products aimed directly at the Asian market and: “good price sensitivity” (Powell 1994).

The literature has presented the early marketing efforts of Australian universities as simplistic and fragmented. The institutions were represented as using a ‘grab-bag’ of unproven marketing tools with little or no subsequent evaluation of their usefulness.
They were said to have competed very strongly with each other, ignoring government pleas for a more ‘national’ approach to marketing. The very aggressive marketing stances taken by many universities had left little doubt in the minds of overseas governments of their basically mercenary intentions. We turn now to an examination of the way in which the planners at Murdoch University dealt with task of marketing their courses to international students.

The Policy Makers At Murdoch University

A succession of reformist administrators at Murdoch University in the 1980s had irrevocably changed the nature of decision-making at the institution. The consultative, collegiate approach initiated by the University’s founders been progressively replaced by an increasingly centralised structure. It is no surprise, then, that the development of policies and processes for the marketing and recruitment of full-fee paying international students at Murdoch University was delegated to a small, appointed committee: the Working Party on Overseas Students (WPOS). This body was nominally accountable to Academic Council, but the Vice-Chancellor actually appointed the members, and it would report to the Council, indirectly, through him. While the WPOS was the officially designated group for the initiation of policy and process, a significant portion of the work of marketing and recruitment was carried out by the members of another small committee: the Committee for Overseas Relations (COR). In 1986, Andrew Holloway was the major link between the two committees, being executive officer for both of them.

The COR was established in the early days of Murdoch and initially played a rather low-key (and certainly non-commercial) role in University affairs (Holloway 1992).
When the COR was asked to work on the marketing task, in cooperation with the WPOS, there was some initial reluctance. This was clear from its July 1986 meeting, at which the COR expressed anxiety that the allocation of places to international students might discriminate against Australian students. It declared that it preferred the current University policy stance, by which no more than five percent (it was actually ten percent) of the total student population could be from overseas (COR 1986a). However, the members did ultimately agree to add “fee-paying students” to the list of the responsibilities of the COR, which they listed as being:

- To invite groups of international students and staff to visit Murdoch,
- To encourage reciprocal visits by Murdoch staff and students,
- To facilitate the expansion of opportunities for international graduates to undertake higher degrees, and
- To assist with the development of overseas universities with fewer available resources than Murdoch. (COR 1986a).

For the purposes of this study, no distinction has been made between the contributions of members of the two committees. The discussion focuses on the development of policy and process pertinent to marketing and recruitment for the University as an entity. Eventually the two groups were merged to form the International Affairs Committee (IAC) in October 1989 (Loneragan 1989). The new committee was made up of the Pro Vice- Chancellor (Academic) as chair, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (ex-officio), the Registrar and three academic members of staff. The effect of this amalgamation was a significant reduction in the level of participation of Murdoch University staff in the decision-making process a propos the enrolment of full-fee paying international students. Acting Vice-Chancellor Loneragan’s justification for the reduction in the size of the policy-making group was that it would assist in amalgamation discussions that were pending with the UWA at that time. He said:
Because we believe that it would be to our advantage to have a coherent policy to discuss with our colleagues at Nedlands, we suggest that the two current committees cease to exist as separate entities and come together to form a new committee called the International Affairs Committee.

Market Research

The International Campus Task Force did not carry out a market survey before producing its Interim Report. There was a plan for Yanchep Sun City Pty. Ltd. to commission a full market survey, but this never eventuated (Murdoch University 1985b). In a chapter of the report titled “Student Demand” the Task Force made an attempt to define the size of the potential market for Murdoch’s services. Unfortunately, the predictions that they made were largely guesswork, based on enrolment figures from the USA and the UK. Holloway (1994) expressed the opinion that the theoretical method of estimation used in the Interim Report was of little real value. He said that it was not until he and Nairn actually travelled to Singapore and Malaysia that they “got a real feel” for the significant potential for enrolments from those countries.

The Task Force report also included what it called an “amalgam” of the impressions gained by the Australian Government Education Services Trade Mission to South-East Asia in July 1985, and those of Vice-Chancellor Boyce, who visited Singapore and Malaysia in October 1985 (Murdoch University 1985b). This ‘amalgam’ was more a summary of the attitudes of the various South East Asian governments towards the new Australian policy on full-fee courses, than an indicator of the size of any potential markets. In general, the report revealed a fairly neutral response to the policy changes - except in the case of the Malaysian Government: “Malaysian authorities have expressed concern about the drain on foreign exchange reserves and the Western
influence that may alienate their students from Malaysian society and culture” (Murdoch University 1985b). “We are already deeply concerned that some developed countries are practising this undeclared antagonism when formulating their education policies” (Mahathir Mohamed 1984).

The *Interim Report* also noted the (erroneous) conclusion, reached by the Trade Mission, that there would not be a large market for full-fee courses in Singapore: “The market for educational services in Singapore is relatively small (Singapore has a population of only 2.5 million) and is well catered for by domestic education facilities” (Government Education Mission to South East Asia 1985).

In spite of the expressed concerns of the Malaysian government and the relatively small population of Singapore, it must have been obvious to the members of the WPOS that these two countries were likely to be the most significant sources of full-fee paying international students. It would have been noted that, at that time, WAIT and the other colleges of advanced education, and several secondary schools and business colleges in Western Australia, recruited most of their international students from Singapore and Malaysia. In addition, by far the majority of the government-aided and private international students already studying at Murdoch in 1985 were from those two countries.

In the case of Singapore, the Commonwealth Government’s trade mission appears to have completely misinterpreted the situation that existed there. When Nairn and Holloway visited these countries, in 1986, they reached the conclusion that there was a significant potential for enrolments (Hollaway 1992). In their later study of the
market potential in Singapore, Smart and Ang (1992) confirmed the belief that there would be ongoing interest in enrolment in Australian tertiary institutions for many years to come. They found that the conviction of the people and government that education was critical to Singapore’s economic competitiveness had created: “An almost insatiable demand for higher education”. This level of demand, combined with the very stringent Singaporean academic university entry requirements, had forced many mature-aged students and polytechnic diploma-holders, in particular, to look overseas for opportunities to pursue their degree courses.

In 1983 there were already 10 300 Malaysian students studying in Australia, mainly under foreign aid arrangements and other cooperative programs between the Australian and Malaysian governments. There was still, however, a great potential market for fee-paying students, especially from the ethnic Chinese and Indian sectors of the population. Because of a desire by the Malaysian Government to raise the economic status of the ethnic Malay population, fifty-seven percent of university places were reserved for them. Given that thirty-five percent of the population was made up of ethnic Chinese, and that this was the economically strong and ‘educationally hungry’ section of the population, there was a significant under supply university places within Malaysia (Tan 2001). Furthermore, Malaysia had responded angrily towards the UK’s introduction of tuition fees for international students in 1984, initiating a “Don’t Buy British” boycott (Nicholls 1987). These factors, coupled with the relative proximity of Australia, and Perth in particular, created a potentially decisive cost-advantage for Western Australian universities when compared with their overseas competitors in the UK and the USA.
On the basis of this information, the WPOS concentrated its early marketing efforts towards students from Singapore and Malaysia, while continuing to explore future possibilities in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Thailand and Korea. In the Minutes of its August 1986 meeting, the COR recommended that the University aim for an initial intake of approximately 300 full-fee paying international students, with up to 250 of them sourced from Malaysia and Singapore.

Sources Of External Assistance For Murdoch

There were several sources of potential assistance available to the University. As observed earlier, governments at both Commonwealth and State level were, at that time, looking towards increased export activities to alleviate their economic problems. As part of this push for exports, a number of marketing bodies had been created.

The EXIM Corporation

The Western Australian Burke Labour Government had set up the EXIM Corporation in 1983 to seek out and negotiate export opportunities for all aspects of the Western Australian economy. This body had offices in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong, and representatives in Saudi Arabia, the UK, Norway, West Germany and Greece (Parliament of Western Australia 1986d). EXIM and the State Government wanted educational institutions to make use of its facilities, though only the UWA had done so by November 1986 (Parliament of Western Australia 1986b). In spite of the somewhat soured relations caused by the establishment of the covert agreement between EXIM and WAIT during the Yanchep feasibility study, Murdoch University eventually made effective use the Corporation. On a number of occasions the EXIM office facilities in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur were used for interviews and small-
group meetings with potential customers (Osborne 1992). EXIM was also reported to have ‘set up’ some very attractive and effective exhibitions on behalf of Western Australian educational institutions. One of these, the EXIM “Education Forum” in Singapore in late 1987, received an enthusiastic commendation from Holloway in his report to the WPOS. Another resounding success was an evening seminar arranged by EXIM for prospective students, who wanted more detailed information about Australian education opportunities, as a follow-up to the “Academia 87” exhibition in Kuala Lumpur. On another occasion, the “Careers 89” exhibition, which had been sponsored by EXIM, received the “thumbs up” from Anne Boyd, who had worked with the WPOS while a member of the COR, and who was, at that time, the Director of the Overseas Student Office (Murdoch University 1989b). In late 1989, the functions of EXIM in Singapore were taken over and expanded by the Western Australian Education Office - an arm of the Western Australian Department of Trade. This had become necessary because unrelenting political and media pressure had brought about the effective demise of EXIM:

When EXIM began reporting sensational success for its sale and promotion of WA’s educational institutions overseas the media belittled it, detracted from it and finally wrote stories of extreme racial prejudice in WA and its institutions which were run under banner headlines in the Asian press. Especially in Singapore where Lee Kwan Yu’s government, alarmed at the exodus of young qualified people from their city state, commenced a major campaign to stem the tide.

In 1989 I took over Economic Development in my own right but only presided long enough over EXIM to see the commencement of its winding up.

(Grill 1991)

Austrade

Austrade was the Commonwealth Government’s marketing organization and had offices in most of the large cities of South East Asia. Murdoch and other educational
institutions were able to gain some benefits from the use of Austrade’s facilities. For example, Austrade staff members in the various cities were able to give advice to Murdoch staff as to the most effective marketing methods that they could use in the context of particular countries (Osborne 1992). Austrade also held regular Trade Fairs in the various centres, and the educational institutions were invited to participate in them. At these exhibitions Austrade usually provided an ‘education booth’, from which information about many institutions could be disseminated from the one focal point. There was, however, a significant fee for the use of Austrade’s services and this, combined with a concern about being ‘lost in the crowd’ of Australian institutional information, led Murdoch to a quite early decision to discontinue their association with Austrade in favour of working with EXIM and The International Development Program of Australian Universities and Colleges (IDP) (Murdoch University 1988a).

The International Development Program of Australian Universities and Colleges (IDP) was set up and owned by a consortium of Australian universities. It was initially set up in 1969 to provide assistance to education systems and institutions in developing countries, and to provide information to overseas countries about courses being offered in Australian universities. In the circumstances engendered by the new policy on international students it was also able to play a significant role in assisting Murdoch and other universities to market themselves in South East Asia. IDP encouraged the centralisation of Australian educational marketing and advised institutions like Murdoch to be very cautious about striking out on their own. Those responsible for planning at Murdoch were very anxious that their university, a relatively new player in the market, should stand out from the others. As a result of
this attitude, they eventually tended to either set up their own campaigns or join with a
small group of others to do so. IDP was, however, useful for its ability to suggest
good venues, approaches and agents that could be used in those campaigns. A large
amount of information was widely available through the Australian Education
Centres, set up by IDP in association with QANTAS airways, in Fiji, Hong Kong,
Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand. These centres
were the only bodies officially endorsed by the Australian Government for the
processing of information and the counselling of potential students about studying in
Australia. The AECs were funded on a user-pays basis from the point-of-view of both
the institutions and the prospective students, though some initial advice was available
to students free of charge (Murdoch University 1987b). Because of the fees that IDP
charged to institutions, Murdoch ceased using the AECs in 1989 and did not resume
use of IDP services until March 1992. At that stage, the cost of the services was
described as being 0.004% of the University’s operations grant (Murdoch University
1992a).

As well as using the advice and facilities of the various established external marketing
bodies described above, Murdoch University set up its own internal marketing and
recruitment processes. These were established initially by the WPOS, which,
combined with the COR, evolved into the International Affairs Committee.
Eventually, this type of business became the sole province of the International Office
(now known as Murdoch International).
Marketing Methods

Media Advertising

The first and simplest tool to be used by Murdoch was advertising in the print and electronic media of the cities and counties that were being targeted. Most of this effort was concentrated into the English-language newspapers, like the *Straits Times* in Singapore and *New Straits Times* in Malaysia, and English language television in both countries. The print advertisements had to compete with a large number of others, from all over the world. The education section of the classifieds in the *Straits Times* that I read in September 1986 contained dozens of advertisements for a whole range of education services, at various levels, in more than ten countries. Murdoch purchased regular spaces in those newspapers in the early stages of its campaign to recruit full-fee paying international students because it had, “No name in the area” (Holloway 1992). Nearly $20 000 per year was spent on this form of advertising in the first couple of years. According to Holloway, it was initially a very successful campaign, but the proportion of recruitment funding allocated to it was gradually reduced in favour or more direct forms of contact with potential students. The University was also very careful to ensure that it adopted a simple, factual approach to this form of advertising. It adopted this stance because there had been some criticism that some of the advertisements placed by its agents were “too commercial” and aggressive, emphasising aspects like the need for students to: “Hurry and enrol because there are only 30 places left!” (Marr 1987). The Malaysian Government had made many complaints about this approach to marketing (Smart and Ang 1992, Murdoch University 1985b).
The WPOS believed that television would also be an effective marketing medium. The typical format used was that of, what purported to be, a current or graduate student of Murdoch University encouraging others to join them. The images used were of the best facilities of the University and the most attractive parts of Perth and its surrounds. It was believed that it was important to promote the city Perth, as well as the University, in the advertisements because it was felt that most overseas people thought of Australia in terms of only Sydney and Melbourne (Murdoch University 1987a). The speakers portrayed in the advertisements always displayed excellent English skills in an appeal to English-speaking matriculants to join them in their studies at Murdoch. Students interviewed for this study at Murdoch in 1992, said that this form of advertising had first raised their awareness of Murdoch as a possible venue for their studies, when they had been watching English-language television, often with the aim of improving their own English. They did say, however, that the main information that they received came from other more direct and personal sources.

The television advertisements also attempted to encourage and reassure the parents of prospective students. These advertisements were usually in the form of simulated letters that had been written home by Murdoch students, with dialogue of the nature: “Hi Mum and Dad, here I am studying at Murdoch University with its great facilities for learning, living in this well-appointed Student Village and making lots of good friends and contacts while I am studying”. One wonders at the efficacy of such a campaign, given that the parents would most likely have had a much lower level of English language skill than their children! It would seem that this part of the thrust could have been more effectively made on the channels that transmitted in the local
languages, where both parents and students would be exposed to the campaign. International Office staff at Murdoch said that there had been some discussion, in the earliest planning meetings, of the use of this form of advertising. They had not used local language television advertising because they believed that potential students needed to be very comfortable in English, and that it was most likely that the best candidates would be more likely to be watching the English-language telecasts (Tan 1993). However, there were some more general advertisements, about coming to Australia for tertiary education, to be seen on the local channels, as a result of placements by IDP and similar agencies. As with the advertising in the print media, the effectiveness of television advertising was somewhat limited by the large amount of competition generated by the campaigns of other institutions from all over the world.

Local Agents

The use of local agents in South East Asian cities was a widespread practice that had been used by North American and UK universities for many years prior to the entry of Australian universities into the full-fee market. Perhaps partly through self-interest, IDP had some reservations about the use of agents. Belcher (1987) expressed some concern that many of the agents whose services had been rejected by both UK and USA universities were actively seeking relations with Australian institutions “with some success”. Murdoch staff decided that, with careful selection and instruction, local agents could perform a valuable front-line service for the University. This resulted in the establishment of some very good relationships with their agents, especially those in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. In the latter case, the agent CMS had acted on behalf of the University for more than fifteen years. To achieve this on-
going successful relationship, Murdoch staff were initially required to set clear guidelines for CMS, especially after some early negative feedback from full-fee paying international students resident at the Student Village at Murdoch. A group of Murdoch staff met with six Singaporean students in September 1987 (Marr 1987). The students reported that CMS staff did not know how to interpret the program structures outlined in the Murdoch handbook and had confused them with incorrect information about such matters as course pre-requisites, semester options, core courses etc. The agents also had only one copy of the Handbook and were charging for photocopies of relevant sections. The students also raised concerns that incorrect information was being given about climate and clothing requirements, transport and accommodation. Suggestions were made that Murdoch staff should instruct the agency personnel in the use of the handbook, and that extra copies be provided both in the agent’s office and local public libraries. The positive response to this feedback resulted in improved training for CMS staff, and the establishment of pre-departure briefings by Murdoch staff members. These briefings became a regular feature of the University’s earliest contacts with its new students. After some similar careful groundwork, Bigg, Davies and Associates were appointed as agents for Murdoch recruitment in Kuala Lumpur.

Murdoch University was initially quite active in seeking agents in locations other than Singapore and Malaysia, but this form of marketing and recruitment was often abandoned in favour of other methods. For example, negotiations begun in late 1986 with possible agents in Korea and Hong Kong were abandoned when doubts were raised about their reputations. It was not until late 1987 that an agent was appointed for Seoul in South Korea, with a resultant disappointingly low number of applications
for admission. A burgeoning relationship with Yonsei University in Seoul was seen as a better source of local information that could lead not only to a formal exchange agreement, but also to knowledge about suitable agents who might represent Murdoch in the region (Boyce 1987). Several companies in Indonesia actively sought contracts with Murdoch through late 1986 and early 1987, but the WPOS decided, as early as December 1986, that the enrolment of significant numbers of Indonesian students was unlikely. It was felt that students from that country generally lacked appropriate levels of English language skills. Unlike Singapore and Malaysia, Indonesia had no structure of English-language colleges or intensive language courses to prepare students for entry to Western style universities. Smart (1998) said that he felt that this market had not been explored in sufficient depth, and he and others took part in a mission to attempt to encourage post-graduate students from Indonesia, in particular, to continue their studies in Education at Murdoch. Commerce, the School with the largest numbers of full-fee paying international students at Murdoch, regarded the Indonesian market as problematical because of the lack of appropriate background content and the generally low standards of the applicants. It was felt that, in general, undergraduate candidates from Indonesia needed to have completed the first year of a university course at home before being considered for admission to the first year of courses in Australia (Davison 1993). The question of marketing in Indonesia was still contentious in 1992, with Boyd asserting, after a visit to that country, that more should be done there to tap into what she saw as a potentially large market (Murdoch University 1992). However, the IAC felt that the previously observed problems with language and scholarship still applied and decided not to intensify its efforts in Indonesia.
Personal Contacts

There was general agreement between all those interviewed for this study that personal contact with potential students was by far the most effective form of recruiting. This was also obviously well recognised by other universities, with Dhanarajan (1987) reporting no fewer than 79 international marketing visits to Malaysia in 1986. There was also some concern in Australia about the level of this form of marketing, as evidenced by a letter from the Australian Vice-Chancellors’ Committee requesting that individual institutions refrain from constant individual marketing journeys to Asia, and asking that they cooperate and consolidate their efforts in association with IDP and Austrade (Murdoch University 1986i). In a very competitive market, it is not surprising that Murdoch, like most others, did not agree with this stance and, while making good use of IDP and EXIM in particular instances, they continued to carry out their own marketing and recruitment exercises that included personal contacts with individuals and institutions in the target countries.

Roadshows

Where cooperation between university teams did occur, the most common format was the so-called “roadshow”, which usually consisted of a tour of Singapore and the larger population centres of Malaysia by a group of exhibitors. These events sometimes coincided with trade fairs or education ‘expos’, but were also carried out in their own right, being considered a very efficient and cost-effective form of recruiting, involving a great deal of personal contact with potential students and their parents. Typically, the exhibition was set up for a few days in a central city location, and then it would be dismantled and carried on to the next centre. For example, one itinerary in which Murdoch University participated in 1988, included Singapore, Kuala Lumpur,
Penang, Kota Kinabalu and Kuching. (Staff also frequently used the fact that they were in the general area for a roadshow to extend their tours to other cities such as Hong Kong, Bangkok and Seoul.) Holloway was a particularly strong supporter of cooperative marketing efforts like the roadshows (Murdoch University 1987b). He expressed the belief that the large IDP booth drew more attention than smaller ones set up by individual institutions. He also advocated the use of Murdoch staff members in the booths, in addition to the IDP personnel, because he believed that this would ensure that the Murdoch product was not overlooked in the bigger picture being presented by IDP. Holloway was also the initiator of the use of local students and/or graduates in the booths. The presence of these already satisfied and successful people, with their willingness to ‘sell’ Murdoch, as well as their ability to assist in the overcoming of misunderstandings due to language problems, proved to be a highly effective strategy. As a result it has been continued and widely copied by other institutions.

It should be noted that there were also a number of problems associated with these kind of recruiting visits. For example, Peter Tan and Roger Lethbridge reported that the promotion materials that they had to work with during the April 1990 Malaysian Roadshow were not of a suitably high standard and reflected badly on the University. They also reported that the Kuching section of the visit had been scheduled on a weekend, with resultant low attendances, because the local secondary schools were closed. Professor Laurie Davidson experienced a similar problem during an earlier roadshow that visited the cities of Eastern Malaysia during the local school examinations. In general, however, there was a high degree of satisfaction with the outcomes of this form of marketing. The participants in the Malaysian Roadshow in

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August/September 1991 reported very favourably to the IAC, declaring that: “The visits were very well organised and much interest was shown”. In Kota Kinabalu (Sabah), there were one-hundred-and-sixteen genuine, serious inquiries from prospective students and this was followed by one-hundred-and-six enquiries in Kuching (Sarawak) and sixty-five in Brunei. These latter contacts were considered to be very significant, as Air Brunei had just recently established direct flights from Bandar Seri Begawan to Perth. This led to a decision by the IAC to participate in “Austrade Brunei” in 1992.

The recruitment programs for 1988 and Semester One 1989 epitomize the intensity of the effort, and the large amounts of time and funding, expended by Murdoch on its overseas marketing program. In March 1988, Davison and Holloway visited Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia, while Professor Keith Norris represented the university in the IDP booth at the Education Fair in Hong Kong. In April, Boyd staffed the IDP booth at the Austrade Exhibition in Singapore and Davidson travelled with the Roadshow to Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Penang and Kuching, extending his journey into Indonesia in early June. The university was also represented at EXIM Exhibitions in Brunei/East Malaysia (June), Taiwan (August), Hong Kong (August) Malaysia and Singapore (October). In March 1989, Davison and Holloway travelled to Hong Kong, Korea and Taiwan, while Boyd attended exhibitions and trade fairs in Singapore and Malaysia. In April, Davidson and Tan attended EXIM fairs in Singapore and Malaysia, but were unable to attend the Austrade fair, which actually clashed with the EXIM event. In June, Norris and another (un-named) representative took part in the IDP Seminars in Singapore. Further visits were planned for Semester Two, with Hong Kong, Taiwan, Brunei and Thailand to be added to the itineraries.
One important result of these explorations of alternative markets was a realisation that there was little or no prospect of enrolments from Thailand (Murdoch University 1990). Also, on this and subsequent visits to Hong Kong, it was found that it would be very difficult for Murdoch to establish itself in that market. Some IAC members were disappointed by the negative attitude expressed by its representatives on their return from Hong Kong, about the possible success of marketing campaigns there. They held a perception that the University should have been doing better in what appeared to be a market “teeming with opportunity” (Murdoch University 1990).

However, the marketing teams had found a number of obstacles to success for Murdoch in that market. For example, there were the well-established links between Hong Kong secondary schools and universities and universities in the UK. The problem for Murdoch was aggravated by a general lack of awareness of Australian cities other than Sydney. Another observer, Murphy (1987), said that the most important factor for Hong Kong students in choosing a university was “established reputation”. This, he asserted, was especially true of students attending English-language schools or already possessing good English skills. Murdoch staff found that Murdoch’s English language requirements were beyond, most of the students who were not attending English-language schools. After their visit in 1991, Boyd and Norris concluded that there were many other factors working to restrict the number of students coming to Australia in general and, thus, to Murdoch. There was, for example, less part-time work available for international students in Australia because of an economic downturn. This had also resulted in increases in tuition fees and the cost of living in Australia. At the same time, Australia’s competitors in the USA had offered new incentives to international students, including full working rights and free schooling for students’ dependants. In the UK, the government was offering free...
health care for international students and their families after they had completed six months of their studies. Added to these factors was the very significant rise in the number of tertiary education places, especially in Chinese language institutions, that had taken place in Hong Kong in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Mok and Tan 2004). In fact, the numbers from Hong Kong grew steadily from two students in 1987 to a peak of forty-seven (nine percent of the fee-paying population) in 1990, which, in light of the circumstances described above by Boyd and Norris, was probably a satisfactory result for a small university in what must have appeared to Hong Kong eyes, a fairly obscure corner of the world!

Some considerable success in recruiting was gained as a result of the advertisements in newspapers and television and the giving of information at exhibitions. The level of effectiveness of those campaigns was enhanced when they were followed up by seminars, for those parents and students who had expressed their interest, held in hotels, the offices of EXIM, and even at Australian embassies. The WPOS considered the latter to be their preferred venues because their use would be seen as giving Murdoch a kind of official seal-of-approval (Murdoch University 1987a). In general, it seemed that the closer and more personal the contact that staff made with prospective students, the more likely it was that they would give favourable consideration to the offerings available at Murdoch University.

The Matriculation Colleges

Perhaps the most successful single form of personal contact, according to Osborne and Tan (and inferred by others), was that made by establishing relationships between Murdoch staff and the staff and students of the matriculation colleges in Singapore
and Malaysia. In this environment, staff had direct access to students who either had been educated in English or had the study of that language as a strong element of their courses. Their education was being undertaken on the specific assumption that they would engage in tertiary studies in an overseas university in an English-speaking country. Furthermore, there were often significant numbers of expatriate North American, British or Australian teachers on the staffs of these institutions. One has only to read the advertisements in local Australian newspapers to be aware of the demand for this type of teacher in those countries. Their presence in the colleges ensured that students were exposed to the kinds of teaching/learning activities that would prepare them for further study in ‘western’ universities. It was also easier for students from these colleges to establish suitable entrance standards for Australian, and other overseas, universities because they studied and sat for examinations in widely recognised qualifications such as the UK’s GCE or the Baccalaureate. This, of course, also made it easier for the recruiting institutions to select suitable candidates.

An indication of the potential of this type of contact can be seen in the report of a visit to Taylor’s College in Kuala Lumpur in December 1989. The Murdoch representatives were able to address more than one thousand students and then conduct a large number of individual interviews with interested students. There is almost no discussion in the University’s records of efforts to recruit international students from among those already studying as full-fee students in secondary schools and colleges in Western Australia; in particular from those at the Education Department’s Canning and Tuart colleges. Some early discussions took place with the Principal of Canning College, but nothing of substance eventuated from them (Murdoch University 1986d). Murdoch staff interviewed as part of this study felt that the international students at Canning were more or less tied to WAIT, whose campus
was immediately adjacent to Canning, and that those at Tuart (some thirty kilometres from Murdoch) had an orientation towards the University Of Western Australia. It is probable that those international students studying at the private schools in Perth would have been influenced by the strong UWA orientation reflected in the enrolment patterns of local students from those schools.

It was also considered important to establish good relations with the staff of the overseas schools and colleges. In March/April 1991, for example, Professor Norris and Richard MacWilliam (the business manager), visited schools in East Malaysia. During the visit they spoke to students and staff at three schools and presented books to their libraries. This was followed by a visit to the Murdoch campus in August 1991 by principals from schools in East Malaysia and, in September, by principals from schools in West Malaysia (Murdoch University 1991). Though these visits were sponsored largely by the Western Australian Department of State Development, the fact that the visits were to Murdoch in particular was seen by the IAC as an important result of its efforts in Malaysia. This type of contact with visitors to the campus was also seen as important in raising the awareness of both the existence of Murdoch University and of the courses that it had to offer. As early as mid 1986, the minutes of the COR make references to the need to attract overseas visitors to Murdoch as an important part of any marketing strategy. A few examples of the variety of visitors and the resultant breadth of their potential influence can be seen in: the visits of staff from Guangzhou Institute in both July 1986 and 1989 (leading to the eventual establishment of a fruitful exchange program with that body); a formal visit to the campus by the Chinese Ambassador to Australia, at his request, to observe the facilities and to view the work of the Asia Research Centre and the Asian Studies
program of the School of Humanities; and the visit of three senior academics from the Republic of Vietnam in October 1992. Many other examples are recorded in the minutes of various committees at the University or are described in Murdoch News or its supplement Uni Abroad.

Murdoch’s Use Of Twinning

Twinning is an arrangement between two universities in which students begin the study of their degree courses at one of the institutions and then complete their studies at the other. In most cases, the hosting university for the final years is in one of the developed countries, such as the USA, UK or Australia. This is particularly the case for English-speaking students who begin their studies in institutions in one of the less developed countries. At the time of Murdoch University’s entry into the market for full-fee paying international students, some very complex twinning arrangements were already in place at other universities. The most notable, perhaps, was a program involving several thousand students from Malaysia (mainly from the Mara Institute of Technology) and a consortium of universities from the USA. There had also been some encouraging Australian-based successes in establishing twinning arrangements in South-East Asia, including those involving the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and the Western Australia Institute of Technology. This latter institution, with its soon-to-be-achieved ambition of elevation to university status, was seen as an aggressive competitor to Murdoch for students at both locally and overseas. Its successful twinning arrangements in South-East Asia helped to raise awareness of this form of marketing at Murdoch.
There are considerable advantages to be gained from twinning arrangements for a range of beneficiaries. Students from countries such as Malaysia, for example, can be enabled to complete their studies without the need for an extended period of living overseas. This has considerable financial advantages for students and their families. Students also benefit from gaining at least one extra year of maturity before leaving their home country. Additionally, they have the confidence gained from proven success in the first year of studies at the required level. The exposure to English-language based studies in the supportive atmosphere of their home institution would certainly add to this confidence. Though no formal data was available for the level of success of this type of student at Murdoch, a report to the Senate in early 1993 stated that the students entering the second year of the Commerce program, under an arrangement with the International College of Management Studies (ICMS) had been “at least as successful” as those who had begun their course in the traditional manner at Murdoch. Murdoch’s relationship with ICMS is discussed in more detail later.)

For the country of origin of the students and its tertiary institutions, the benefits of twinning lie in the opportunities to expand the availability of tertiary education offerings. Instead of losing students for the whole study period, they are retained in the local system, providing opportunities for more students, some of who may complete the first year, but then remain at home to complete a local degree. This also creates jobs in the local area and enables the country to include some elements with local relevance before the students travel abroad for immersion in a foreign culture (Lee 2003). There is also a great saving in economic terms for these countries. The loss of foreign exchange currency to the overseas host country, from the expenses of students living and learning there can be greatly reduced if the students can be
retained at home for even one year of their courses (Smart 1988, Megan 1999). For these reasons, the Malaysian Government actively promoted twinning as an acceptable structure in the 1980s (Tan 2001). Some studies appeared to show that students who are not exposed to such a long period of overseas sojourn were also more likely to maintain their ties and commitment to their own country than those who started younger and spent more years overseas (Vatikiotis 1993). This ‘brain drain’ problem, of losing educated people through ‘overstaying’ or application for residence in the countries where study had taken place was, and still is, a very real one for developing nations (Lee 2003).

For the institution hosting the final years of the degree programs, there are some very obvious direct benefits to be gained from increased student numbers and the financial gains that flow from their tuition fees (Mazzarol 1998). These benefits can, in fact, be quite considerable. For example, the addition of nine or ten full-fee paying international students to an under-subscribed Second Year class may result in the establishment of a full class at little or no extra cost to the university. Even after consideration of the costs associated with visits to the twin institution to ensure maintenance of standards, such arrangements have significant implications for program funding. There are also less direct benefits to be gained from twinning. The acceptance such arrangements by education authorities in overseas countries facilitates in the process of recognition of the degrees awarded by the Australian university. As has been discussed earlier, the acceptance of the status of Murdoch degrees in Malaysia overcame some significant problems that arose in the early stages of attempting to market educational services in that country.
In terms of the overall marketing process, significant advantages from twinning arrangements also flow to universities like Murdoch from the increased awareness of the University and of its courses. The presence of a few students studying Murdoch courses in a large institution in an overseas country has the potential to attract other students, not only into that course, but also into other programs based on direct entry on to the Murdoch campus. Such students also help to raise the awareness of the University in the local community, outside of their own institution, enhancing the potential for further enquiries and enrolments. Holloway (1992) said that he felt that Murdoch had not entered early enough or aggressively enough into negotiations for twinning arrangements. In his opinion, the establishment of courses in overseas locations was potentially the best marketing tool available to Murdoch because of the permanent awareness that would be created in the area, as opposed to the rather transitory effects created by the less frequent visits of marketing missions.

There are also some potential problems in the establishment of twinning arrangements. The most crucial of these for the university issuing the final degree is the establishment and maintenance of standards at the twin institution. The reputation of the university at both the Australian and overseas levels is its greatest marketing asset. For example Murdoch University’s own early struggle for recognition and enrolments in Western Australia (in the face of the extremely high profile of the University of Western Australia) had made it very aware of the need to establish its credentials and to protect its reputation. As can be seen in the following accounts of two twinning arrangements involving Murdoch University, it was the quality control aspect that created the most caution and led to the prolongation of negotiations. Ultimately the solution adopted was for Murdoch to establish and maintain control
over the content and the methods of presentation and assessment of the earlier years of
the courses overseas in return for the provision of its expertise in course construction.
A supervision regime was established, either on site or by regular visits from Murdoch
staff. In addition, the partner institution was required to submit representative samples
of work and assessments to program committees at the Murdoch campus. There is no
record of conflict over these matters in any of the twinning programs established by
Murdoch. It appears that the arrangements allowed enough flexibility for the other
institutions to achieve their own aims at the same time as promoting those of
Murdoch.

Edwards International College
Murdoch University’s relationship with the Edwards International College is a unique
example of twinning arrangements. In this particular case, the partner institution was
located in Perth, close to the University, rather than overseas, but its students were
primarily from overseas. Such an arrangement obviated some of the advantages to be
gained from twinning with an overseas institution, but these were at least partly offset
by the ease and the lower cost of the supervision of the standards of the students
entering the course, course presentation and assessment levels. This case is also a
good example of the time and care required to ensure that any such agreement will
meet the needs of both the institutions and of the students.

Edwards Business College was a long established and very successful Perth institution
providing secretarial training, mainly to young Western Australian school-leavers.
With an infusion of capital from new owners, the college expanded its operations to
include the provision of courses in Management Studies, Administrative and
Secretarial Studies and English Language Studies to international as well as local students. In the process, it also changed its name to Edwards International College and later to Edwards College. In 1987 it was eighty-five percent owned by a Western Australian Company, Univest, of which the Principal was Mr Eddie Chieng, and its enrolment consisted mainly of international students.

In September 1897, the Academic Council of Murdoch University received a tentative proposal from Edwards College that its Diploma graduates be admitted into the Second Year of the Bachelor of Commerce degree at Murdoch. Edwards College was asking, in effect, that its Diploma course be recognised as equivalent in standing to the first year of the Murdoch University course. At its meeting on 12th September, after much initial opposition, the Academic Council agreed to support the proposal “in principle” (Nairn, 1992). This level of agreement was subject to a number of conditions. These included requirements that the University would have control over the admission of students to the program, and that satisfactory monitoring arrangements be set in place for the teaching and assessment of courses. Vice-Chancellor Boyce said that he expected the admission standard to be at least that of UK Matriculation. This control over entrance, and the limitation of the proposal to an initial group of twenty students, on the basis of a three-year trial, would ensure that balance was maintained between local and international students in subsequent years of the Commerce program on the Murdoch campus.

In early October 1987, Nairn, and the Director of Edwards International College, Mr John Watkin, held preliminary talks regarding the proposal for Edwards to become an “affiliated institution” of Murdoch University (as allowed for by Statute 21 of the
University’s Charter). Nairn (1992) was very interested in this proposal as it represented a new source of finance for the University from full-fee paying international students for whom the initial marketing and recruitment costs would be incurred by Edwards. A further incentive for Murdoch was proposed in a letter from Watkins to Nairn on the 9th October, in which he made the offer that Edwards would be responsible for either providing or finding suitable accommodation for the students, as it was already doing for its current students. Part of this commitment would be fulfilled by the establishment of an Edwards’s campus at Murdoch, on land to be leased from the University. This development was to include the building of some student accommodation. (As it transpired, Edwards College soon took over the Melville Centre, which Murdoch University had been using for a short time as accommodation for its own international students.)

Subsequent to this meeting, Watkin sent a formal letter of proposal to the Murdoch University (Watkin 1987). This proposition suggested that Edwards become a de facto university offering full degree programs: “Under the direct supervision and on behalf of Murdoch University”. This was, in fact, very like the Yanchep Campus proposal, with the added attraction of the College being almost on the same site as the University and with the marketing being carried out by the College. Given the result of the debate over the Yanchep proposal and considerable doubt about the ability of Edwards to finance such a project, the proposal was always unlikely to have any hope of acceptance by the Murdoch community. Meetings between the senior management staff of both institutions resulted in an amended proposal that included requirements for strict adherence to Murdoch’s standard academic requirement for admission and for quality control on teaching and assessment that would be imposed by significant
Murdoch participation in the selection of Edwards’ staff. It was further agreed that, initially, courses could be offered in Asian Studies, Finance and Accounting, and Economics with First Year classes being taught on Edwards’ campus and subsequent years being completed at Murdoch. Limits were to be placed on the numbers to be admitted to Second and Third Year courses. Surprisingly, there was also agreement that Edwards might progressively take over the teaching of Second and Third year courses, subject to Murdoch’s approval of quality control standards over the initial three-year trial of Edwards College’s teaching of the First Year courses. To assist with the establishment of the program, Murdoch University offered to enter into further discussions about leasing its Melville site to Edwards on a long-term basis with a “right of first refusal” to purchase, if that possibility ever eventuated. The possibility that the facility could become available for lease arose because of the anticipated completion of some new student accommodation on the Murdoch campus during 1988 and 1989. This would decrease the pressure on Murdoch’s accommodation stocks that had originally made use of the Melville Centre necessary. In return for the university level status thus given to Edwards’ courses, an affiliation fee of six percent of each student’s total tuition fee was to be payable to Murdoch University.

The proposal for Edwards to become an affiliated institution of Murdoch University in accordance with Statute 21 was put before the Academic Council and the Senate in November 1987. Because his designated role included responsibility for “entrepreneurial activities”, it was Nairn who presented and explained the proposal to the members of the two bodies.
The Minutes of the November 11th meeting of Academic Council record that: “Several members expressed concern about the lack of opportunity for consultation and the haste with which it would have to be pursued if Edwards was to commence teaching under these arrangements in 1989.” They were assured by Nairn that, though the initial discussions had been held outside of Council and the Senate, the provisions of Statute 21 would provide adequate safeguards to ensure that the University did not rush into a disadvantageous arrangement. Most important of the safeguards was a requirement for a full report on the educational status of Edwards. At this stage, according to Nairn, it was most important to signify to Edwards that its proposal was receiving serious and urgent attention by the University. This was another example of the evolution of a corporate management style at Murdoch University. The need for swift, centralised decision-making was justified on the basis that the opportunity might disappear should longer consultation be necessary. Though it was not stated at this meeting or at the subsequent meeting of the Senate, it seems that some of the urgency was almost certainly due to the fact that Edwards had begun affiliation discussions with Golden Gate University in California. Education Minister Pearce had directed Edwards, as a Western Australian company, to first explore the possibility of affiliation with a Western Australian university before he would consider any approval process.

The major concern of the members of Academic Council was for the maintenance of the standards and academic reputation of Murdoch University. They made it very clear in their discussions that any arrangements with Edwards must ensure that the entry and exit standards at Edwards were of the same high level as those on the Murdoch campus. Further, while it recognised the potential advantages of accessing
the Edwards recruiting infrastructure in South East Asia, the Council insisted that it was important that some delineation be established in its advertising campaigns: the Council required that clear distinction be made between advertising for courses under the arrangement with Murdoch and other, lesser level, courses that Edwards might continue to offer. The maintenance of standards would be further enhanced by Murdoch’s involvement in the selection of those of Edwards’ staff who would teach the Murdoch courses. This would not only establish the suitability of staff for the teaching programs, but also ensure that teachers with strong research interests (as opposed to teaching-only interests) would still be attracted to Murdoch rather than to Edwards. With these concerns still in mind, Academic Council resolved to approve the proposal “in principle”, subject to a rigorous study of, and satisfactory report on, the educational status of Edwards College. At this stage, there was still some clear concern that the Senate might go ahead and grant full approval to the proposal without waiting for Academic Council. A minority of councillors suggested that the Council recommend to the Senate that it simply “note” the proposal and then resolve to await the full report on Edwards’ educational status before making a final decision. (These people clearly recognised that collegial decision-making was disappearing at Murdoch.)

At the November 23rd meeting of the Senate, similar concerns were raised about the maintenance of academic standards under the proposed arrangements with Edwards College. Nairn reminded the members that, before any further progress could occur, Academic Council would be thoroughly investigating Edwards’ educational status. A group of Senate members re-opened the debate about the desirability of becoming involved with a privately owned institution that was likely be more highly motivated
by the requirement to make a profit from its activities than to produce excellent academic outcomes. They thought that the owners of Edwards might place undesirable pressure on Murdoch staff to lower standards to achieve high pass rates for the students that they had recruited. Nairn told the Senate that Chieng had stated that he saw any profits for the College as coming more from incidental activities, including banking and property management, than from the operations of the College itself. Nairn also urged the Senate to consider the benefits, in terms of financial advantage and the increase in student numbers, that would accrue to the University from the affiliation. Eventually, a resolution to support the proposal “in principle” was passed by the Senate.

The negotiations leading to the conclusion of an agreement between Murdoch University and Edwards (under the auspices of its new division: the International College for Management Studies (ICMS)) continued over the next thirteen months. As late as October 1988, some final sticking points, such as the quality of the teaching and library facilities at ICMS, were still being discussed by the Murdoch’s decision makers. In fact, there was a great deal of caution exercised throughout the whole period, particularly on the part of the Academic Council. The Council was determined that the presentation of Murdoch courses at ICMS would be firmly under the control of the University. It is clear that some elements within University still had reservations about the whole endeavour, even after the very comprehensive conditions had been widely discussed on campus and agreed to. On several occasions, members of Academic Council and the Senate demanded that their cautious stance be clearly indicated by the recording of their abstinence from voting on resolutions that moved forward the affiliation process too swiftly. At the March meeting of Academic
Council, Professor Norris, Dean of the School of Economics and Commerce, reported that there were deep divisions within the School about the Edwards proposal. He said that the Economics program committee was not prepared to support the proposal, because it feared the intervention of agencies from outside of their committee in decision-making about the presentation of Economics courses. On the other hand, the Commerce program committee had offered strong support. This latter area was eventually to host the biggest numbers of full-fee paying international students - with demonstrable benefits to the program (Davison 1991). The Management Committee of MUASA also expressed concern that not enough consideration had been given to the effects on the working conditions of staff at Murdoch nor on their relationship with the teaching-only staff at Edwards, whose work would be constantly overseen by their colleagues at Murdoch.

It was not until the December meeting of 1988 that the Senate finally resolved, with the support of Academic Council, to proceed with the affiliation. Up to twenty First Year students in the Commerce program would be enrolled by ICMS and taught at Edwards’ facilities in Perth city. Satisfactory progress of these students, rigorously mediated by Murdoch staff, would enable them to take their place as Second Year students at Murdoch University in 1990. At this stage, there were still some outstanding issues in regard to the lease or sale of the Melville Centre to ICMS for both the presentation of its programs and the provision of accommodation for its international students. As these issues do not impinge on the twinning aspect of the process, they are discussed later in the study, when some other features of the affiliation are considered.
Kolej Damansara Utama (KDU)

The relationship of Murdoch University with this college in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, was also based mainly on the attraction to students of Murdoch’s Commerce program. In early January 1990, it was suggested that a twinning relationship be established with KDU. This institution was perceived to have a reputation for high academic standards, and it already had some experience of similar arrangements with universities and colleges in the UK and the USA. Visits to the Director of KDU by Holloway and Davison during 1990 and 1991 completed the negotiations that saw the first students starting their Commerce studies at KDU in 1992, with a view to their completion at Murdoch in subsequent years. It is unfortunate for this study that little information about the negotiations is available in the University’s records. The major decisions being made by the negotiators ‘in the field’, with authority delegated to them by the International Affairs Committee. It is possible that the successful completion of the negotiations with ICMS, with the signing of what appeared to be a ‘watertight’ agreement about teaching and assessment standards, had reassured the Murdoch community that similar arrangements made at KDU would also protect the University’s standards and reputation.

According to Davison (1994), there was some initial reluctance on the part of KDU, because it was already involved in several arrangements with other overseas institutions. The Director of KDU was concerned about the potential for the fragmentation of the efforts of her institution and about another increase in overseas involvement in the presentation and assessment of courses. These concerns would have been particularly pertinent, given Murdoch’s insistence that its own materials be used in the First Year course at KDU and that a moderator from Murdoch should visit
the KDU campus once per semester to ensure that the standards were compatible with those being observed at the Australian campus. It is due to the great persistence and efforts of the Murdoch negotiators, and especially those of Professor Davison, whose Commerce program was to be the main beneficiary, that an agreement was signed in May 1991 by Vice-Chancellor Boyce and the Director of KDU, Mrs Terri Hew. Under that agreement, students were to begin the first year of study of their Commerce degree at KDU in 1992 and transfer to the Murdoch campus at the start of 1993. Of the eight initial enrolees in the course at KDU, six successfully completed the first year and began their second year at Murdoch in February 1993. In welcoming these students to the university, the Director of the International Office, Anne Boyd, said that another twenty-five students had enrolled in the twinning program at KDU for 1993, ensuring the continuing success of the program (Uni-Abroad, April 1993).

The relationship continued to prosper. During the later years of the 1990s, an increasing number of students remained at KDU for the second year of their Murdoch courses. Professor Gary Martin, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Strategy) at Murdoch University said that he expected that eventually all such students would complete the whole three years of their Murdoch degrees at KDU (Martin 2005). This had obvious economic, educational and social benefits for the students, and some (mainly economic) advantages for Murdoch University. The University was relieved of the costs of providing on-campus services to the students, and KDU absorbed nearly all of the cost of marketing the courses in Malaysia. Furthermore, Malaysia was now a significant exporter of education services to other Asian countries, especially to China. There was scope for Murdoch to market its courses to those students attracted
to KDU, from China and elsewhere, by the significantly lower cost of studying there than in Australia.

Disted

Though not “twinning” in the strict sense of the term, the relationship between Murdoch and Disted Services Sdn Bhd had the common purpose of allowing students to study Murdoch courses while remaining in their home countries. A feature that distinguished this arrangement from others negotiated with overseas institutions is that students would be able to complete the whole of an undergraduate degree without any attendance at the Australian campus. Murdoch was to be responsible for the provision of course materials through its External Studies Unit and the students would attend evening or weekend tutorial classes at various centres throughout Malaysia. The arrangement of the tutorials would be the responsibility of Disted. The relationship was launched in mid 1987 by Boyce, amid high hopes that the number of students would grow rapidly from the initial group of fifteen Malaysian students studying for the degree of BSc (Mathematics). It was hoped, and presumed, that the availability of this option at a reasonable fee, $A2000 per year, would encourage viable numbers of students to enrol and study in this mode. The program would also serve, it was anticipated, as an awareness-raising exercise for other potential students, external and internal, within the communities in which the DISTED students lived. However, the promising initial numbers were not, maintained so that by as early as December 1987 the WPOS suggested Murdoch’s withdrawal from the arrangement. By September 1990 there were only five students in the whole program, and there were also no new enrolments for Second Semester. In his letter terminating the agreement with Disted, Boyce, noted that the arrangement had in fact become counter productive to
Murdoch’s marketing endeavours in the area. He observed that students and their parents were beginning to wonder whether the low enrolments in DISTED programs might be an indication of some problems at Murdoch as a destination for overseas study (Boyce 1990).

Scholarships As A Promotional Device

The use of scholarships as a marketing tool is common at all levels of education. One has only to peruse the local newspapers at the appropriate time of the year to see many advertisements for scholarships to attract students to schools in the Secondary sector of Western Australia. There are also many examples to be found in the English language newspapers of South East Asia, in which both secondary and Tertiary level institutions from many countries attempt to attract able students into their courses.

One very important feature of the benefits of the granting of scholarships was reported in the findings of the Goldring Committee (Commonwealth of Australia 1984a) and the Board of Trade Mission to South East Asia (Commonwealth of Australia 1985b). These inquiries found that international students studying in Australia often did not come from wealthy backgrounds (as was the common belief of most Australians). In many cases, students were supported in their overseas studies by the combined efforts of an extended family group, or even of a whole community. The prospect for such students, of the acquisition of funding assistance would have a definite bearing on their choice of university. Furthermore, governments of the less affluent countries (and even some of the more financially stable ones) had complained that overseas universities, including those from Australia, were causing a significant drain on their finances. Large transfers of local currency to Australia were seen to have a significant
negative effect on their balance-of-trade figures, and governments in the South East Asian region spoke out about the ‘greediness’ of overseas universities. The offering of scholarships, along with statements to remind Asian nations that a great many students were still being educated completely at Australia’s expense, was designed to go at least some of the way towards amelioration the opposition from outspoken critics like Dr Mahatir of Malaysia.

There was some early recognition among the academic staff at Murdoch that the offering of scholarships could be an important device for attracting high quality students to the University. In a letter to the Community Relations Committee, the Chairman of the Mathematics Program at Murdoch, Peter Kloeden, suggested a scheme that would offer relief from half, or all, tuition fees to highly qualified students (Kloeden, 1987). The advantages would be, he asserted, the creation of goodwill for Murdoch in South-East Asia, “Where Australia is getting a reputation for greed in educational matters”, and the attraction of highly qualified students. He pointed out that the scheme would be quite cheap being: “Essentially subsidised by other full fee paying students”.

According to both Tan (1993) and Osborne (1993) there were several reasons for adopting the practice of offering scholarship to overseas students. Firstly, this method of marketing represented a different form of advertising, by which the name of the University would become more widely known in general, as well as indicating its willingness to assist international students. It was expected that the winners of such scholarships would act as unofficial ambassadors for Murdoch University in their local region. It was believed that this would be a very cost-effective form of
marketing, that the message about Murdoch far beyond the initial readers of the announcement of the availability of the scholarships. Secondly, scholarships were perceived to have the potential to draw the more able, potentially more successful, students away from other institutions. There is no data to suggest the success or otherwise of this premise at Murdoch. It would appear to have been in the interests of the University to examine the cost-effectiveness of its scholarships from this standpoint, but it did not do so.

In spite of the stated enthusiasm for a scholarship scheme, only two were made available initially. They were to be awarded only after the successful completion of the first year of an undergraduate degree. They would be offered at the beginning of each semester to cover the cost of tuition for the completion of the students’ undergraduate studies, subject to the achievement of satisfactory academic progress during the period. It would also be a condition of the award that the recipient not be in receipt of any other scholarships. Academic Council agreed with the proposal and forwarded it to the Senate for final approval, with the recommendation that such scholarships be awarded to the “most outstanding” full-fee paying international students each semester.

Additional half-scholarships of one semester duration were established in August 1990 on the recommendation of the International Affairs Committee. These were to be for pre-entry students who had completed an Australian matriculation or GCE A-level qualification in Malaysia. The stated aim of these inducements was to attract more Malaysian full-fee students to broaden the base of overseas recruitment (which at that stage was mainly Singaporean). The offer of these scholarships also
highlighted the importance of establishing and maintaining good relations with the Matriculation Colleges in both Malaysia and Singapore. These colleges specialised in the education of students seeking to gain qualifications suitable for entry to English-language undergraduate programs in overseas universities. Such students were of high priority for Australian, and other, universities because they came with an assurance of adequate English language skills and a background of study that would enable them to be easily assimilated into study programs. Most of the colleges were staffed largely by expatriate teachers from North America, the UK or Australia and the students were thus exposed to a ‘Western’ style of Upper Secondary education, similar to that of the Australian students, with whom they would study at Murdoch University.

The most unusual of the early scholarships were four that were awarded to Malaysian students by the government of Sabah in late 1986 (Murdoch University 1986i). None of the who were interviewed was able to remember the exact circumstances of this offer. It can be noted from the enrolment records that in 1987 more students from Malaysia attended Murdoch than from any other country, and that this was the only year in which that occurred. It is most likely that the Sabah government, with a large shortfall in the number of local university places for its students, was seeking to establish good relations with a new source of places for them. With a very young population (about thirty-five percent under the age of fifteen), the ongoing demand for places would have been very strong. The shortage would have been exacerbated by the ‘Malaysians First’ aspect of the tertiary education policy of the Malaysian Government, which excluded large numbers of ethnic Chinese students in Sabah, as elsewhere in Malaysia, from the state universities. Given the significance of the ethnic
Chinese in this state (about twenty-two percent of the population), this would have been a constant problem for education authorities. Sabah was also one of only two states of Malaysia with a very significant Christian minority (about seventeen percent), whose children would not seek or be welcomed into the places at Muslim universities.

Scholarships have been considered to be an important and valid marketing tool since the inception of the full-fee programs at Murdoch University. There has been no formal research or analysis of the cost-effectiveness of this particular tool, but it is widely held to be very effective by members of the Murdoch community. They see the advertising of scholarships as an excellent means of gaining exposure for the Murdoch ‘brand name’. There was also recognition that the granting of the funding to students was an important facet in the establishment of good relations with both local communities and national governments in the target countries.

Exchange Programs

The arrangement of exchanges of students, and sometimes staff, between Murdoch and other universities was one of the original duties of the COR. The committee was set up in the early days of the University to look after the interests of the international students who were enrolled as part of Australia’s aid commitments, and also to attempt to bring other international influences into the institution. It had, for example, negotiated an exchange agreement with the Gustavus Adolphus College in the USA and the first student arrived under this program in Second Semester 1988 (Murdoch News, Sept 1988). According to Osborne (1993) the COR had been a very low-key committee that had achieved some relationships, but had not set out to bring about
large numbers of exchanges. Some of the other interviewees were not even aware of
the existence of the COR! In the earliest days of the planning for full-fee students,
however, the COR worked closely with the WPOS in planning recruitment strategies.
The minutes of this committee from 1986 onward very closely reflect those of the
WPOS and it was no real surprise that the two were amalgamated to form the IAC.

With the advent of the full-fee opportunity, there was a renewed effort to establish
exchange programs with overseas universities. There were several reasons for a
concentrated effort on what appears, at first glance, to be a process that would be
neutral as far as student numbers and income were concerned. A major reason for the
establishment of exchange relations with foreign universities was, of course, the
raising of awareness of Murdoch University as a legitimate institution at which
international students could pursue their studies. It was almost a form of free
advertising, with the literature about possible exchange opportunities gaining wide
circulation within the overseas host universities. In September 1988, the WPOS
decided to offer two travel bursaries of $1200 to encourage an exchange of students
with Yonsei University in Korea on the premise that: “This arrangement will assist
future full-fee recruiting in Korea” (Murdoch University 1988a). The establishment
of exchange relationships also had important non-financial benefits for the students at
Murdoch University because it opened up the possibility for them to spend some time
at overseas universities during their studies, thus helping their own development and
allowing the University to achieve some of its internationalisation objectives.

The most important reason for becoming involved in exchange programs was that it
was expected that there would be a significant imbalance in the numbers of exchange
students in Murdoch’s favour, with a resulting considerable inflow of funds. Simon
Avenall, the co-ordinator of “Study Abroad” in 1992, said that favourable exchange
rates and the fact that students from North America in particular already paid large
sums for their university education, meant that significant numbers could equally
afford a semester at an Australian university as at their home institutions. It was also
probable that students from the USA would be interested in courses in Arts and Social
Sciences rather than the more vocationally oriented courses usually taken up by Asian
fee-payers (Belcher 1988). It thus represented an opportunity to spread the load more
evenly across the Schools and to enrich the cultural mix both on campus and in the
student accommodation facilities.

An example of this type of program can be seen in the arrangement with Butler
University in Indiana, USA. The Murdoch staff were first alerted to this possibility by
John Belcher, a consultant to Butler University during a visit to Perth in November
1988. He asserted that it might be possible that as many as ten to twenty students per
year could be interested in a semester or year at Murdoch University, provided that the
fees were kept at a reasonable level. He said that care should be taken not to follow
the undesirable example of a UK university that had raised its fees by twenty per cent
each year for the first three years after an exchange agreement had been signed with
them. That Belcher’s information represented a genuine prospect for Murdoch
University was reinforced in June 1989 when Holloway attended the NAFSA
Conference in Minnesota. At that conference he found that there was a significant
potential for students from the USA to spend their Junior Year Abroad at an
Australian University; the university of Sydney had, for example, enrolled thirty-five
students for 1989 and the University of New South Wales as many as eighty.
Negotiations continued with Butler until an agreement was reached that ensured a small flow of students to Murdoch from the beginning of 1990 (Murdoch University 1989a). The size of the enrolment was somewhat limited by the extra airfare component of a journey to Perth, rather than to the Eastern States. There were also some constraints imposed by the size and policies of the Student Village, which preferred to integrate students from different countries in its houses, rather than the USA students’ preference to be housed together. At the beginning of the project there were also some limits imposed by the extra workload that USA students represented to what was a very small Overseas Student Office at that stage, because they were considered more demanding of counselling and support services than other fee-payers (Belcher, 1988). The arrangement has, however, prospered with as many as fifteen Butler students enrolled in one semester early in the program (and rising to up to two hundred per year in the late 1990s). One of the reasons for this success was the introduction of a “Broome Experience” for students from the USA who participated in a Study Abroad program at Murdoch. During their time at Murdoch, students were taken to the Kimberley region of Western Australia to view its scenery and to learn from the cultural experiences that it had to offer. This feature proved to be very attractive to students, who spread the word to others when they returned home (Avenell 1991).

Negotiations with other universities, particularly in Asia, resulted in considerable success in establishing exchange relationships, so that Murdoch developed such associations with more than twenty overseas institutions. Of course, the exchange agreements were not just for the purposes of recruitment and increases in student numbers. A significant number of Western Australian students have benefited from
the opportunity to take part in an exchange, and this must be seen as one of the many good things accruing to Murdoch University, staff and students, as a result of the establishment of the full-fee paying international student program. Here are just two examples. In 1986, seven Murdoch students travelled to China to spend a year at the Guangzhou Institute of Foreign Languages to enhance their studies of the Chinese language. At the same time, a Visiting Fellow from Guangzhou, Mr Wang Cuitian, worked in the Asian Studies program at Murdoch, adding considerably to the expert teaching available to the students in that program. In Semester Two 1991, four students from Murdoch’s South-East Asian Studies Program continued their study of Indonesian language, politics, society, art and literature at IKIP Malang in East Java (Uni Abroad 1991). In August 1992, ten Japanese Studies students from Murdoch participated in an exchange visit to Kansai University of Foreign Studies and Osaka and Konan University where they were able to: “Study the Japanese language intensively under the supervision of native language teachers with fellow students from all around the world” (Murdoch News 1992). In the following year, students from the two host universities journeyed to Murdoch to take up studies there. Opportunities for Murdoch students to obtain credit for their studies while at overseas universities were also established in Thailand, Vietnam, USA, Korea and a number of European countries.

Enrolments
The original small intake of forty-eight full-fee paying international students in 1987 grew to a substantial seven hundred and forty-four in 1991. These were impressive growth figures representative of a seven-fold growth in just five years. In the table that follows, small individual country numbers have been aggregated into totals for a
continent or region (for example Indian Ocean). As can be seen from the table, the
great majority of these students came from Singapore and Malaysia and, while the
balance was somewhat adjusted over the years, these two groups continued to
dominate the enrolment figures, with the numbers from Singapore rising to sixty-one
percent of enrolments in the year 1991, while the Malaysian contribution dropped
from fifty percent in 1987 to twenty three percent in 1991. A deal of concern was
expressed by those interviewed about the continued and growing reliance on
enrolments from Singapore, in particular, and Malaysia. The Registrar, Mr Dan
Dunn, said that there was a danger that the university would become too reliant on the
fee-payer funds that it was receiving and, in particular, that a change in leadership or
policy in Singapore could cause enrolments to dry up, with consequent serious budget
problems for Murdoch. The enrolment figures for the years beyond the period
covered by this study show that these predictions were over-pessimistic. Students
from Malaysia and Singapore still represented about fifty-five percent of Murdoch’s
international enrolments in 2004 (Murdoch University 2004).

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<td>332</td>
<td>416</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>744</td>
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When the data for enrolments is grouped by School of Study (and by programs within the schools where that is significant), another very great imbalance is evident. The programs within the School of Economics, Commerce and Law accounted for sixty-one percent of the enrolments, with the Communication Studies program from the School of Humanities taking up another thirteen percent. Surprisingly, most of the Murdoch staff interviewed by me were not concerned by this pattern of enrolment, asserting that it was in those areas that the demand existed and that prospective students showed little interest in the other courses that were offered to them.

Professor Alan Davison, from the School of Economics, Commerce and Law and a
long-time member of the IAC, said that his many visits to exhibitions and schools over the years had been in response to a demand for first-hand information, from an authoritative figure, about the courses that were in high demand. He said that his area had received very great benefits from the full-fee program, not because of any bias in the marketing program that his prominence in it might possibly signify, but because Commerce and Economics were the areas in which the greatest demand had been experienced. This view is supported by the fact that other significant long-term members of the IAC, such as Professor Laurie Davidson from Mathematical and Physical Sciences, for example, had also expended a great deal of effort in marketing campaigns with only small returns to their own Schools. According to Alan Davison, the staff within the School of Commerce, Law and Economics had been very interested in the possibility of expanding their student numbers and had made significant efforts to produce excellent promotional materials. The British marketing authority Kinnell (1990) supported this type of approach, asserting that marketing effort should be concentrated into courses with vocational orientations that are in high demand, and in which there is strong staff commitment within the university.
Full-fee enrolments by School/Program 1987 to 1991

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<td>Biological &amp; Environmental Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economics, Law and Commerce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>398</td>
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<td>Computer Science</td>
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<td>Social Sciences</td>
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<td>Psychology</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veterinary Science</td>
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| Total                                 | 48   | 168  | 342  | 579  | 744  |

The strong marketing and recruitment programs undertaken by Murdoch University in the period from 1986 to 1991 resulted in full-fee paying international students representing about ten percent of the student population by 1991. While this had not reached the target of fifteen percent envisaged by the original decision-makers, it
really was a very good result for a relatively new university entering a market long
dominated by far better-known competitors both from within Australia, and from the
well established providers in the USA and the UK in particular.

Financial Returns

The success of the program can also be demonstrated by the level of the contribution
of the students’ fees to the University’s finances. The 744 students enrolled in 1991
contributed nearly $5 500 000, which represented about seven percent of Murdoch’s
total income of almost $75 000 000. It is difficult to determine the profit that accrued
to the University from these fees. Both Dunn (1993) and Davison (1994) asserted that
the program had been very successful financially. Davidson said that most of the cost
of the new multi-media learning facility in the Economics and Commerce area had
been funded from this source. It is almost certain that the profit to the University was
at least the ten percent that had been foreshadowed by the WPOS (Murdoch
University 1986g).
CHAPTER SIX: CUSTOMER CARE - SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

Once a fee-paying student has chosen and enrolled at a particular university, it becomes the responsibility of the institution to provide all of the services necessary to allow the student to be successful. From the university’s point of view this process should be seen not only as providing “after sales service”, but also as useful publicity to be used in promotional literature distributed to attract more students (Makepeace 1989). Certainly, the staff at Murdoch University were aware of the need to provide good services to their new international students. The document, Corporate Strategies, a policy stance adopted by the WPOS in 1987, stated:

The University should aim to acquire a reputation for looking after its overseas students with special attention being given to:

- Special orientation programs.
- English language and learning skills support.
- Food and cultural needs.
- Student accommodation.
- Student counselling.

(Murdoch University 1987e)

This statement reflected a much higher level of awareness than that expressed earlier in the Interim Report of the International Task Force, in which the topic of “facilities for students” occupied half of one page and was very limited in its scope. With the Yanchep proposal now out of the way, the Working Party was able to concentrate specifically on problems relating to providing for full-fee paying international students on the Murdoch campus. It is clear that substantial consideration was being given to meeting the University’s obligations to those students.

Which Services?

The University of New South Wales academic, Burke, (1989) provided a comprehensive template for the provision of services to international students. He suggested that there were three phases in the on-going process:
• Pre-Departure: Before the students leave their home country they require both accurate course advice and a briefing covering practical details of everyday living, such as climate, clothes, living expenses and health services. If possible, he said, this should include meeting with ex-students of the university who have returned home.

• Arrival and On-going Support:
  o Welfare Needs: including reception, orientation, provision of at least temporary accommodation, assistance in finding permanent accommodation, information about part-time employment and emergency financial assistance, and legal information and assistance.
  o Educational Support: including course advice, language and communication skills, study and learning skills, and careers advice.
  o Personal and Health Matters: Access to medical, hospital, dental and optical services as well as to an international student advisor, a counselling service and peer support.
  o Recreational: Sport and cultural activities, both within the local community and the universities students clubs and societies.

• Pre-Return: Information and briefing on the current situation in the home country including information about careers and placement services. Re-entry programs to assist in adjustment back to the home culture and the practical situations that exist there.
In its *International Students’ Handbook*, DEET (1992) stated that institutions must provide as a minimum: orientation, accommodation, counselling, remedial education if required, and welfare facilities.

Australian Education International (2002) carried out a survey of international students who had completed a course of study in Australia in 1999. They found that the services that the students had required and used most often were: orientation programs, advice about study, help with English, help with government agencies, help with housing, counselling, social events to meet other students and information about health insurance and banking.

The Current Study

In this chapter, these essential services have been grouped together and analysed under four sections:

- **Orientation**: the provision of information to students both before their departure from home and after their arrival at the university.
- **Everyday Living**: including accommodation (both provision by the host university and assistance to students with finding off-campus lodging), transport and food.
- **Teaching**: including the provision of support for effective learning.
- **Welfare**: including the general well being of students, relationships with staff and other students, and the potential problem of racism.

Each of these services is examined separately. In each section, a review of the literature relevant to the service precedes an examination of the Murdoch University response in regard to the formulation of policy and practice.
Orientation

Supplying students with the knowledge that they require to adapt and be successful in a new study environment is a fundamental responsibility of an institution. Kinnell (1989) wrote of a need for: “Clear, appropriate and well-timed pre-arrival information”, about both education in the host country and specifics about the university, its expectations, programs and facilities. She also wrote of the need to give accurate details of the culture and the general nature of the new environment into which the students were moving. This should be followed by orientation sessions, held soon after arrival, at which further details about everyday living needs and academic life at the university can be given.

Makepeace (1989) also stressed the importance of comprehensive, accurate pre-departure information. Brochures should include information on, at least: climate clothes, shopping, banking, transport systems, accommodation, cost-of-living, places of worship, specialised food shops (eg. halal butchers), and the health care system.

The Australian Vice-Chancellors’ Committee (1990) also produced a comprehensive list of the information that should be given to students. In its Code of Ethical Practice the Committee suggested the inclusion of topics as wide-ranging as the geographical location of Australia and the mandatory requirement for students to obtain health-care insurance.

The transfer of information should not be considered as a “one shot” process. Many of the sources recommended an ongoing service, provided through a designated staff member or members, to provide certainty, clarification and advice to international students about the situations in which they might find themselves. A failure to
provide accurate and timely information, according to Ballard and Clanchy (1991),
can produce students who are never able to function as efficiently as they might, either
in their courses or in their lives out of class. Some of the students in the Ballard and
Clanchy study continued to experience problems with culture shock, homesickness,
gaps in background information, social relationships and general difficulties in fitting
into Australian student life: “…right to the end of their courses, to their day of
graduation”. The findings of Beecham (1986) and Savage and Briggs (1986) also
revealed significant deleterious effects on both students and institutions when
comprehensive, accurate and ongoing information had not been made available either
prior to departure or as soon as possible after arrival.

Both Makepeace (1989) and Kinnell (1989) suggested the establishment of a body on
campus responsible for overseeing the provision of services to international students;
very much in the mode of the ‘international offices’ that were to appear at Murdoch
and many other Australian universities.

Additionally, according to authorities as diverse as the Australian Vice-Chancellors’
Committee (2000), Makepeace (1989) and Burke (1994), the task of informing and
caring for students is not complete until they are on their way home. They
recommended that students be provided with re-orientation programs before their re-
entry to their own culture. This appears to be an excellent idea, especially when we
consider the youth and inexperience of most of the students, and the often vast
differences in behavioural expectations that exist between society in Australia and the
students’ home countries.
Orientation At Murdoch University

Initially, Murdoch University relied on a combination of recruitment staff from the WPOS, their agents in overseas countries and admissions officers from the administrative section of the University for the pre-departure orientation of its first intake of full-fee paying international students in 1987. Andrew Holloway (1994), the Overseas Student Officer at Murdoch University, said that the first group did not receive much pre-departure information about living in Western Australian, either in terms of its culture or its physical attributes. It had been assumed by the recruiters and others that the students were from old British Colonies and that they would have garnered knowledge about such things in the course of their education. It is not really clear why this expectation existed: Australian students generally know little about the other “colonies”. However because of this error of judgement, most of the necessary information had to be passed on to students during a two-week orientation program held at the Noalimba Centre immediately after their arrival. Noalimba was some distance from the Murdoch campus and students were given temporary accommodation there during orientation because no suitable venue existed on the University campus.

The orientation program was organised largely by Holloway and the staff of the Educational Services and Teaching Resources Unit (ESTR). The program was very comprehensive, and necessarily so, because there was much to be done. As well as having large gaps in their knowledge about Perth and Murdoch University, many of the students had not completed their enrolments. Typically, they had opted for a course, such as Commerce, but had not yet selected the units to be studied within their courses. This meant that the Admissions staff had to spend significant amounts of
time with individual students to complete this vital task. There was also a need for
staff to carry out a number of fundamental administrative tasks, including, for
example, checking that the students had obtained health cover, or whether they were
eligible for drivers’ licences in Western Australia.

The ESTR staff administered tests of English competence to confirm the accuracy of
the formal qualifications that had been declared by the students in their applications.
They also provided some English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for the
students, especially in the areas of everyday conversation and the conventions of
academic writing. As a result of the testing and the mini ESL courses, nearly fifty
percent of the students were advised to undertake regular, more comprehensive classes
in English once their university studies were under way. There was also an attempt to
explain some of the differences in the teaching/learning experiences that they would
most likely encounter in their courses. As discussed later, (in the section on teaching
and learning), this kind of out-of-context approach to learning is not particularly
effective, and such activities were given reduced emphasis in subsequent orientation
programs (Beasley 1993).

Because their permanent accommodation was not ready for them, this first group of
students had to be satisfied with some short visits to the units in which they would
ultimately be living and some information about travel from there to the University
and to the other services that they would require. Even this token effort was denied to
many of the students because of a continuing uncertainty about the ultimate location
of their accommodation. This was seen as a considerable “black mark” against the
University. The later section on accommodation recounts the measures that were taken to ensure that this unsatisfactory situation did not arise again in the future.

There were some formal receptions included in the orientation program. At these functions, the students were given an opportunity to meet some of the teaching and administrative staff with whom they would be interacting during their studies. It should be remembered that the International Office did not exist at this stage (1986), so it was important that the students were not only introduced to staff, but also given a detailed tour of the campus to show them the offices from which the various staff operated. There was even a Ministerial reception for the students, demonstrating the importance that the Western Australian Government placed on the full-fee program, with its potential for significant economic advantages to the state. The feedback from the students about this event rated it as a success - except for the length of the Minister’s address! This had apparently been too long and only partially understood by the students. It is to the credit of the Murdoch staff, and the Minister, that the report of the next orientation program mentioned that this problem had been addressed.

There were also some activities of a more general nature, aimed at introducing the students to aspects of Australian life. They were given tours of the area surrounding the University and of the city of Perth, including a picnic and barbeque in Kings Park, perhaps the best known of Perth’s scenic attractions. There were several social gatherings at which Murdoch staff and students hosted the new international students. These functions involved both Australian students, and international students who were representative of the significant number already studying at Murdoch under
various scholarship programs. Significantly, there were no representatives of the Murdoch Guild of Students involved in this orientation program. It was to be several years before the Guild decided to participate. The minutes of the December 1990 meeting of the Guild Secretariat stated:

Alex mentioned that the Overseas Students had their own orientation programme and that we needed to get in on the programme. It was decided that we approach the Overseas Office and request that the Guild participate in the orientation programme.

It is probable that the resulting lack of knowledge about student representation at Murdoch deprived the full-fee paying international students of a potentially beneficial source of involvement with other students. This probably contributed to the emergence of the strong country-based associations that were soon formed on the campus.

From the point of view of the University, the most important outcome of the initial orientation program was a realisation by the WPOS that more needed to be done to ensure that students had better information about Western Australia, Murdoch University and the courses that they would be taking, before they departed for Australia. Some basic misunderstandings about accommodation, the nature of their courses of study and even the climate, needed to be addressed. Students said, for example, that they were given a false impression of winter temperatures in Perth and, as a result, had brought only one sweater with them. It was important to get such details correct, they said, because clothing was much less expensive in their home countries than it was in Australia.

As a result of the feedback, pre-departure briefings were instituted in major centres of offshore recruitment. The first of these was in Singapore in 1988, when both an
information session and a reception for the new students and their parents were held in January (Murdoch University 1988a). More was also done, in the earlier stages of the recruitment process, to give more complete and accurate academic information, especially about course structures. Where pre-departure meetings were not possible, the University relied on bodies such as EXIM and on its agents (to whom it gave special training) to provide information to new students prior to their setting out for Perth.

The model established during the orientation of the first group of students set the pattern for the future. Subsequent programs were enhanced by the fact that they could be held on campus and with the students already established in their permanent accommodation. Because of these factors, staff were able to reduce orientation to one week and still provide the same level of service. Greater emphasis was placed on making time available for students to complete their enrolments and to have questions about their individual circumstances dealt with. The time required to achieve this new level of individual attention was provided, from 1989 onwards, by the inclusion of already established full-fee paying international students, who acted as group leaders throughout the orientation week. They also agreed to maintain contact with the new students in their groups for at least the first three weeks of semester. This initiative was well received by the students and greatly reduced the pressure on the small group of organising staff (Osborne, 1989).

Another popular initiative originating from the 1989 orientation was the Host Family Program through which the Murdoch Convocation Committee organised for some of the students to spend a weekend with an Australian family. During this first attempt,
there were not enough hosts to satisfy the high level of demand from the students. There was more success during future orientation periods, and at other times in the year, because members the local service club Rotary Australia generously offered to participate in the program. In 1991 the Host Family Program was moved from the orientation period to a time two or three weeks into the semester. An article in the Murdoch News (1991) explained that this change had been made so that students were able to get settled into everyday routines before expanding their horizons into the local community. The same article contained a concise summary of the activities that had become the routine for orientation. On the formal side, students were given information about their enrolments, banking, accommodation, support services and study skills. They also took part in a “campus treasure hunt” designed to assist them to find their way around the University. New students were also given opportunities to participate in less formal activities with staff and other students. This latter part of the program usually included a formal reception, a disco, a ‘bush dance’ and a ‘barbeque and games day’ in Kings Park.

Thus, Murdoch University quickly evolved a system of orientation that enabled the efficient transfer of essential information to its incoming full-fee paying international students, both prior to departure and immediately after arrival. The program also swiftly established the key elements necessary for good ongoing relationships between students, staff and the local community.

The Establishment Of The International Office

During the first few years of the full-fee paying international student program at Murdoch, the responsibility for its organization was spread across several groups
within the University. Marketing and recruitment were carried on by the Working
Party on Overseas Students, in combination with the International Relations
Committee. The large degree of overlap in staff and functions of these two
committees would lead to their combination into the International Affairs Committee
in 1989. The WPOS was also responsible for the formulation of advice on policy
directions that would ensure the achievement of the objectives of the program, which
had been determined by the Academic Council and the Senate. Enrolments,
admissions and accommodation were functions of the central administration.
Orientation and ongoing welfare matters were dealt with by the WPOS, the COR,
members of the ESTR staff, and anyone else who could be co-opted.

As the list of tasks and responsibilities grew, it soon became clear that some changes
were needed. Most of the members of the committees were academic staff, for whom
work on the full-fee paying international student program was being carried out in
addition to their normal teaching, research and/or administrative duties. The only
extra support that the WPOS and the IAC received in the early stages was the
appointment of Holloway, for half a day per week, to undertake some administrative
duties for them. Over the first two years of the program’s operation, Holloway’s
function was expanded and he eventually taking up the University’s newly established
position of Overseas Student Officer.

From 1988, Rob Osborne, the manager of Student Services, provided Holloway with
some extra part-time assistance. After a very short time, Osborne recognised the need
for additional staff to be dedicated solely to international students. In a paper
supporting the establishment of an Overseas Student Adviser, Osborne (1988) said:
During these initial stages of the FFP (full-fee paying) programme our support for overseas students has concentrated on preventive services, particularly during orientation. It should be noted that the provision of these services has relied on the willingness of some staff to contribute to the exercise in ways which are well beyond what could reasonably be expected of them in the normal course of their duties and has represented a genuine desire on their part to help ensure the successful establishment of the programme. However, with the exception of ESL support, we have not yet been able to provide the necessary range of remedial services. This has placed considerable strain on our existing resources, where we have to rely on the goodwill of staff and students to try and deal with matters that are well outside their responsibilities or their competence.

Osborne reminded the University’s decision-makers that the AVCC’s *Code of Ethical Practice in the Provision of Full Fee Courses to Overseas Students* called for institutions to appoint an Overseas Student Adviser to coordinate services in respect of international students. He asserted that the University’s policy that: “Once admitted, they should not be distinguished from the general student body”, had led to a much increased workload for Student Services, because the services in greatest demand from these students had been in social work and health. He recommended that the University set up, at least, a position of Overseas Student Councillor within the Student Services section. A small allowance for a part-time commitment was made, but it was not until the formation of the International Office that Paul Melloy was appointed as a full-time Overseas Student Adviser.

When the Overseas Student Office was established in Semester Two 1988, Peter Tan was appointed as Administrative Officer. According to Tan (1993), the Overseas Student Office was made responsible for:

- Marketing and development of the program.
- Processing of applications for admission.
- Processing of applications for the award of credit/advanced standing.
- The initial welfare of the international students, including an airport meeting service and the orientation program.

- Servicing international education programs including sister-university agreements and staff/student exchanges.

- The hosting and housing of international visitors to the campus.

Duties relating to international student enrolments were still being carried out by the University’s general Admissions Office. The full-fee paying international students had access to Osborne for some of their counselling needs, but on most occasions they needed to share the University’s resources with other students. The Overseas Student Office received valuable assistance in the organising and running of the orientation program and other functions from the ESTR unit and from members of the general staff, who volunteered their time on top of their normal duties. Accommodation was made the shared responsibility of the WPOS and some part-time staff working out of Student Village. Later, this was supplemented by the appointment of a Housing Officer who worked out of the Administration Office.

Clearly, this dispersed approach to the provision of services was not ‘best practice’ as recommended in the sources cited earlier. In a study of the structures that had been established for the administration of programs for full-fee paying international student programs in Australian universities, Denham (1988) concluded that:

*The most effective of the structures appears to be one that is centralised and autonomous because it enables the institution to respond rapidly and effectively to student demands, government regulations and marketing requirements.*

Creating such a structure corresponded nicely with the practice, that had become accepted at Murdoch, of establishing semi-autonomous committees to carry out
specific tasks and to report directly to a senior staff member, most commonly the Vice-Chancellor. The WPOS was such a body and the Overseas Student Office had also been established in this way. Thus, it is no real surprise that when the International Office was created in 1990, it had a similar structure: that of a group of staff who would report, through their Manager and the Registrar, to the Vice-Chancellor. The International Affairs Committee, in its advisory role to the Vice-Chancellor, had some input to the policies and functions of the International Office, but the office was not subject to any level of accountability to the IAC.

After its formal establishment in 1990, the International Office became the single most important provider of student services for international students. Many of the functions previously performed by various other bodies throughout the university were centralised at the International Office. The office became a “one stop shop” for everything from initial marketing to final farewell briefings for students after their graduation (Boyd 1993).

Marketing became the most continuous, time-consuming task for the staff of the International Office, with the Manager, Ann Boyd reporting that she had to undertake up to fifteen trips per year to the target countries in South East Asia. It seems that the University continued to fail to accept that more staffing was required in this area. In December 1988 Hollaway had suggested a full-time “Marketing Manager” because he had been: “Occupied almost fully by the year-round overseas recruitment programme”, and that this had not left him sufficient time for the provision of other services or for planning for better marketing strategies and presentations (Hollaway
1988b). The request was not successful. In 1992, there was still no position in the International Office dedicated to marketing and recruitment (Uni Abroad 1992).

By 1991/92, the tasks of the International Office included:

- Promoting the university to international students.
- Admissions tasks, including liaison with academic staff.
- Advanced standing arrangements and the administration of scholarships.
- Liaising with Medicare in regard to health cover, and collecting student contributions to the fund.
- Providing pre-departure briefings, airport reception and the one-week orientation program.
- Providing welfare, support and advisory services.
- Developing exchange and study-abroad programs.
- Providing briefing to assist students in their return to their home countries on the completion of their courses. (Uni Abroad 1992)

Over all of the years examined in this study, articles in the University’s main publication, Murdoch News, revealed that International Office staff were also involved in the organization of other, less formal, activities such as excursions, social gatherings, “cultural days”, on which the international students displayed aspects of their cultures to local staff and students, and a variety of similar activities. Both Boyd and Tan spoke of the huge load that was being carried at the time by a very small staff (six in 1992) and of the need to expand the resources of the International Office, especially in light of the significant funds that its activities brought to the university.
There was, in fact, something of a dilemma in regard to funding. There was a
perception held by some Murdoch staff that, although the Office was essential to the
generation of full-fee funds, it was itself a very significant consumer of resources,
including staff salaries and a large travel, promotion and advertising budget (Hollaway
1994). Hollaway had suggested to Dunn, as early as 1988, that the program be
distinguished as a separate item in the University’s budget. This could be achieved,
he said, by the allocation of $1000 per student enrolment to the program (Hollaway
1988a). Otherwise, Hollaway feared, the administration of the program would lose its
coherence:

The “one-stop” shop approach at Murdoch has proved very effective. We
have a unit that is geared to marketing, service-oriented to student
“customers” and concerned with the personal welfare of students through
activities such as orientation.

In 1992 the IAC recorded its concern that the budget for the International Office had
not been increased for three years (Murdoch University 1992c). However, this
appears to have been a misconception. The proportion of the budget used for
marketing and promotion had been decreased, by the use of economy airfares and a
lower level of hotel accommodation, but the cost of employing and housing the extra
staff more than balanced this (Dunn 1994). It is probable that the “belt-tightening”
observed by members of the IAC had been interpreted as a static budget because many
of the other costs were still difficult to distinguish from the general administration
costs of the University. The reduction of the IAC’s role to an advisory one, as
opposed to its earlier role in implementation, probably also reduced the level of
members' detailed knowledge of the program.

Though the staffing commitment was small, the International Office successfully
brought together all of the services needed to maintain and further improve the
program for full-fee paying international students. Boyd was confident that the centralised and autonomous nature of the International Office had greatly assisted both Murdoch’s recruitment effort and the full-fee paying international students. In many cases, the person that the student first met at an exhibition or trade fair in their home country was the same person who completed the check of their entrance qualification, arranged their admission and introduced them to other staff and students during the orientation week. This was the preferred practice of the Office, which sought to offer a very high level of service to its ‘customers’, and it was consistent with ‘best practice’ in the previously cited articles.

Accommodation
All of the sources consulted for this study, considered accommodation to be one of the issues of most concern for all international students. Many observers asserted that it was an essential function of host institutions to assist in the provision of this necessity. It was often stressed that it was not sufficient to simply provide information to the students; the institutions themselves should play an active part in securing permanent accommodation for students so that they would be settled as soon after arrival as possible. Kinnell (1990) described this provision as “absolutely crucial” to the welfare and eventual success of students. Most international students, she said, were already dealing with the uncertainties engendered by separation from their home countries and families and needed the assurance provided by a place to call their own. In many cases, there might also be significant concerns about the adequacy of the students’ language skills, which would present them with a formidable challenge in finding their own places. Kinnell, writing of her own experience as an international student, said that the problem of finding suitable accommodation dominated all of her other pre-arrival concerns. This is a very important example for universities to consider.
Kinnell was travelling from the UK to the USA, where there would have been a large congruence of culture and language with her home experience, but she still reported experiencing a high level of anxiety about finding suitable accommodation.

Also speaking on the basis of her own experiences, Tasneem Saiyed, IDP’s manager in Mumbai, said that she recognised the level of importance that students placed on obtaining suitable accommodation:

Now sitting on the other side of the fence and addressing students at the Pre-Departure Seminar, and talking to them about accommodation, I know this is perhaps one of the most worrisome aspects of life after arriving in Australia. The thought of not knowing where they will be living once they get to this foreign land is a frightening experience. (Saiyed 2002)

Saiyed argued that it was essential that the institutions assume the responsibility for assisting students to locate suitable accommodation. She suggested that some accommodation should be segregated from available stocks specifically for the use of incoming groups of international students. Those students could be given deadlines for application and acceptance, after which the places could be released to other students. In addition to the allocation of accommodation, Saiyed suggested that assistance should also be given to students seeking their own places for cultural or ‘lifestyle’ reasons. This support could take the form of providing up-to-date lists of possible independent sources of accommodation and, if possible, accompanying students during their visits to real estate agents or landlords. In this way, problems created by students’ lack of Australian credit histories, tax file numbers and substantial cash or other assets could be overcome. While the last recommendation appears to be an excellent one, it would undoubtedly have created enormous problems for Australian universities such as Murdoch, which would not have had the staff available to provide such a service.
Ballard (1986) declared that an accommodation service must be in place and be of high quality, as it was often the first point of post-arrival contact for students with the university. Satisfaction for the incoming “customer” is absolutely crucial at this stage because early memories, and reports home, play a significant role in establishing the reputation of the host university. As was discussed in Chapter 5, on marketing and recruitment, the value of word-of-mouth recommendation cannot be overestimated in the production of on-going enrolments. For example, in their study of Papua New Guinea students in Australia, Savage and Briggs (1986) discovered significant problems caused by the lack of advice available to those students about accommodation on campus or near to the universities that they were to attend. The students reported a very high level of concern about this aspect of their movement to Australia. Clearly, this type of situation has the potential for a significant negative effect on the recruitment of international students to Australian universities.

Lewins (1990), in a study of the living needs of newly arrived international students, stressed that students require not only “immediate access” to suitable dwellings, but also assistance to settle into them: “Pre-arranged accommodation is the axis of students’ ability to feel catered for and settled. They can then cope with the other unknowns”. However, it was found that in many cases the students had no knowledge of their accommodation prospects on arrival. Even though quite suitable quarters had been organised for them, they had not been told in advance about these arrangements. Others reported that they were immediately taken to their housing, given the key and left to ‘manage for themselves’. In some cases, no information was given to them about routes to the university, transport, or sources of essentials such as food. The first impressions of one student in the study were recorded as, “Cold, hungry and
lonely”. Lewins also warned universities about some of the other problems that they might not foresee. For example, the practice of making quite late offers of places to students in an attempt to ‘top up’ courses often led to problems securing suitable accommodation. Lewins also decried the requirement at many institutions for the students to vacate their on-campus accommodation during the long summer vacation. This created severe problems for students who were not returning to their home countries for the holidays, because short-term accommodation was often difficult to find and very expensive. Seeking accommodation on their own also exposed the students to the risk of facing racist attitudes from potential landlords. A student from the UWA with whom I became acquainted in 1988 encountered a related problem. The landlord of the accommodation that he occupied quite close to the Swan River demanded from him almost double the usual rent if he was to stay for the summer vacation, because the flat could be alternatively let to tourists for the period.

Accommodation At Murdoch University

With a wealth of information from the experiences of both international and Australian institutions with longer experience in caring for significant populations of international students, it could be expected that a university new to the provision of services to these students would prepare itself well. It appears, however, that policy and practice in regard to the provision of accommodation for the full-fee paying international students at Murdoch University developed only after the process of recruitment was well advanced. Osborne (1994) and others recalled that accommodation had loomed large in the discussions with potential customers prior to enrolment and departure, but it had been assumed that there would be no problem because sufficient accommodation would be easily found in the University’s Student
Village. That there is no discussion of this particular aspect of student welfare to be found in the minutes of the organising committee (the WPOS), supports the view that there was a significant level of misplaced confidence that all of the new students would easily find places to live.

As it happened, the level of demand for accommodation places was seriously underestimated in the early days of the program. Many international students studying at Murdoch University prior to the full-fee initiative, under schemes funded by the Commonwealth Government, had found places to live outside of the on-campus Student Village. This may have given rise to some assumptions on the part of the WPOS that the new students would make similar arrangements. Student Village at that time had a very small capacity and could never have been expected to cater for all of this new demand. As might have been predicted, it eventuated that the provision of sufficient extra places did not occur until well after the students had arrived.

Initially, the entire first group of fee-paying students was housed at Noalimba, an institution that had previously been used to house newly-arrived permanent migrants to Western Australia. This accommodation was somewhat Spartan in nature, with common use ablution blocks outside of the sleeping quarters. The students would have had to walk up to fifty metres from their bedrooms to use these facilities. It was fortunate that this group arrived in the summer months of first semester and not in the cold and wet later period of the year, because they had to actually leave the main buildings to get to the ablution blocks. The sleeping quarters were little more than dormitories: occupants had their own small cubicles with a bed and a table, but the walls did not reach to the ceiling. This arrangement provided little privacy or quiet for
the new arrivals. Meals were taken in a central hall, with the food that was available based almost entirely on that which had been provided to a population from a mainly European cultural background. No concessions were made to try to adapt the menus to the usual dietary requirements of the incoming students, who were all from Singapore or Malaysia.

The Murdoch University Senate minutes of February 1987 noted that, at that date, two weeks after their arrival:

Twelve overseas full-fee paying students had been admitted to Student House (Village) together with numbers of country, out of state and subsidised overseas students, but a considerable waiting list remained. Overseas students in particular had encountered difficulties and some 29 were still accommodated at Noalimba but must leave there no later than 9th March.

Noalimba had other commitments for its rooms beyond that date. There are no records of the views of this group of students, and they had returned to their homes before this study was begun. One can but speculate on the damage that may have been done to the recruiting efforts of the University during the next few weeks and months. Certainly, the evidence from the previously cited overseas sources leads to a suspicion that some level of negative reporting would certainly have taken place.

Though there is no discussion about the provision of accommodation recorded in the minutes of the WPOS, examination of the Senate records of the time show that there had, in fact, been some planning at that level to deal with the contingency that the recruiting drive would produce more customers than could be accommodated. (Nairn, in particular, believed that there would be a big demand for places at Murdoch.) In October 1986 the Senate set up a sub-committee, comprised of the Chair of the Finance and Staffing Committee, the Chair of the Property Committee, the Vice-
Chancellor and Mr Hughes, to explore and negotiate for the provision of extra student accommodation. However, due to the very late establishment of this body, none of its negotiations had been successfully completed when the students arrived. The sub-committee had identified three sites for possible acquisition.

The Melville Rehabilitation Centre, a facility owned by the Commonwealth Government, had been used for some years for the care and rehabilitation of head-injured patients. As part of its program of reducing expenditure in the welfare sector, the Commonwealth Government planned to scale down the use of this facility and to close it within twelve months. The remaining and future patients were to be transferred to the responsibility of the State Government’s hospital system. (Under Commonwealth/State arrangements, actual provision of health services is the responsibility of the States, though most of the funding is provided from Commonwealth grants). There being no obvious future purpose for the centre, it had been judged surplus to the needs of the Commonwealth and was placed out to lease by tender. The University expressed interest in this facility, which was quite close to the campus, and began negotiations for its purchase. At the February Senate meeting, the Vice-Chancellor reported that:

The disposal of the Melville Rehabilitation Centre continues to be a very confused affair. Tenders have now been called again, closing on 9th March. However, it appeared unlikely that there would be a very quick decision and even if the University were successful in obtaining the use of the accommodation blocks there, either directly or indirectly, it would be some time before students could be admitted.

A more complete account of the eventual acquisition of this facility by Murdoch University is given later in this chapter.
Howard Court, a group of privately owned investment units near to the University campus, was already occupied by students and seemed like a good prospect. The lease of this property was approaching renewal and the University planned to take control of it. However, in the time immediately after the initial identification of this site as a possibility for the accommodation of international students, the situation changed significantly. The incumbent students, acting as the Howard Court Residents’ Association, tendered for the lease. They saw this as the only way that they could assure themselves of a stable accommodation situation in light of the scarcity on campus and the relatively high cost of similar units in the area. When they realised that the Senate was moving to acquire the units on behalf of the University, the students tendered for the lease to protect their own interests. To assist them in their cause, they approached the Murdoch University Guild of Students to support their case by lobbying the student body and the University administration. The Guild was initially very supportive and voted financial support of up to $25 000 towards the Residents’ Association’s bid (Murdoch University Guild of Students 1987a). However, some friction developed between the Guild and the Residents’ Association over the way in which the project was being developed and the Guild withdrew from the arrangement (Murdoch University Guild of Students 1987b). To the great relief of the resident students, the University changed its stance in regard to the Howard Court accommodation. Dunn (1992) said that the Senate had concluded that there was the potential for a great deal of bad publicity for the University had it proceeded with it intentions of taking over the Howard Court lease. For this reason it had decided to withdraw the University tender for the lease in favour of that of the students and had, in fact, assisted them in the pursuit and eventual success of their endeavour. The Senate reported in February that: “It was understood that the tender had been accepted
although legal formalities would not be completed for some time”.

The third possibility was a group of fourteen houses in a new villa development in Kardinya - the next suburb to the University and in sufficiently close proximity to be suitable for students. These houses, the Pinewood Villas, were available for immediate purchase. Acting on the authority delegated to them in October 1986 (Senate Resolution 114/86) to: “Act following consultation with the Chancellor”, the committee that had been delegated responsibility for finding accommodation, made an offer for the property. The committee’s report to the Senate at this stage appears to have been a formality, as the business had already been successfully transacted and the authority for the group to take such a decision was clear. It is most likely that the committee was taking opportunity to publicly record that Mr Hughes had withdrawn from the committee because his company had become agents for the Kardinya property.

The acquisition of Pinewood Villas is another example of the operational method that had become common at Murdoch University. Consultation with traditional decision-making groups was deemed unnecessarily time-consuming and the reporting/accountability link was greatly foreshortened (in this case the group reported directly to the Chancellor alone). This particular example also highlights a potential danger inherent in such a process, if the integrity of the parties happened to be less than acceptable or the accountability processes less than transparent. While there was no concern about the involvement of Mr Hughes, and he clearly disqualified himself early in the piece, the potential for conflict of interest was obvious. Dunn (1992) did not, in fact, recall this detail of the events and it is clear that the reconciling of Mr
Hughes’ position was never considered to be a problem. Dunn was full of praise for the process, asserting that this approach to management was effective and efficient. He said that there had been some initial negative reaction to the more centralised, less consultative, approach to administration initiated by Boyce, but that people were starting to see the value in taking advantage of opportunities as soon as they arose. In the case of the Kardinya villas, he said, swift, decisive action had brought about the speedy resolution of a problem that might otherwise have left the University in a very embarrassing position when the places at Noalimba were no longer available after the 9th of March 1987.

The incident also provides an excellent example of the thoughtful, often innovative approach taken by the university in many of its dealings in connection with the full-fee paying international student program. Some time before the students were to actually take possession of the villas, a group from the Senate sub-committee visited each of the other residents in the complex. They explained to the incumbents that the incoming tenants were all from overseas and were mainly the older students from the group. They intimated that they could expect the students to be quiet neighbours who kept regular hours, would have no noisy parties and with few vehicles to cause noise or congestion. The result, according to both Dunn and Osborne, was a trouble-free occupation of the accommodation and harmonious relationships between the residents.

Nairn also recalled the success that the University had with this project:

We bought some units in South Street and thought that we might have a problem with the residents. So we met with them and told them about our plans and about the characteristics that they might expect from overseas students: few cars, few or no parties, good manners, and a few odd cooking smells. We also got support from one of the residents who had been the landlord for several overseas students and gave a great reference for them. (Nairn, 1992)
On the other hand, the acquisition of the Melville Rehabilitation Centre does not appear to have been so well handled. A perceived lack of transparency in the dealings between the University and the Commonwealth Government led to a good deal of negative reaction from the local populace, which questioned both the process by which the university obtained the property and the use to which it would be put. Articles and letters in local newspapers suggested that the deal had been made in secret negotiations between the University and the Commonwealth Government. There was also a strong community belief that the property should have been made available as a public facility. My personal experience with the State Government’s Local Area Planning Committee over several years had revealed that this kind of call for ‘public use’ often had a more ‘commercial’ rather than ‘social’ objective. Properties that border open areas like schools and small hospitals (without emergency sections) are valued more highly than those in built-out areas. There was almost certainly a concern on the part of the local community that the University would further develop the vacant land around the hospital facility and lower the value of their properties. There was also another commercial aspect to the opposition. As will be discussed below, a number of local people had made, and were considering, significant investments in the provision of accommodation for international students. This group would have seen the provision of a less expensive style of accommodation at the Melville Centre as being in competition with them. The prospect of students coming and going late into the evening was also a source of misgiving for the neighbours.

There was also some ill-informed opposition on the grounds that it was believed that it had been the University that had initiated the closure and the take-over process and
was, therefore, responsible for the displacement of the head injured patients from their facility. “The Vice-Chancellor expressed regret that several inaccurate but possibly damaging reports had been made in a local newspaper concerning the University’s purchase of this property” (Murdoch University 1987c). In time, the University was able to refute the accusations of impropriety in the transaction and to explain the benefits to the community of the expansion of Murdoch’s student base. Dunn (1993) said that Boyce had played a significant role in regaining the goodwill and confidence of the local community. This had also been assisted by the attitude of state and local governments, which spoke in favour of the University’s bid for the property. This was, of course, in their own interest, for if the facility had become ‘public’, then one of them would have been expected to take responsibility for it, resulting in a potentially unprofitable financial commitment.

The Senate minutes of 21st July 1986 recorded that a message had been received that indicated that the university was the preferred tenderer for a two-year lease of the Melville facility. This meant that the University would be able to provide a hostel style of accommodation in addition to the self-catering Pinewood Villas and the Student Village flats. This was particularly significant news because the first group of Murdoch staff that had travelled to Singapore and Malaysia on a recruiting mission had discovered that, while accommodation on or close to the campus was a very important consideration for prospective students, the style of the housing was also significant (Osborne 1994). The group had noticed a significant degree of hesitancy when they described the Student Village and the Pinewood Villas style of accommodation: where students were required to ‘fend for themselves’ in regard to cooking, cleaning, washing and other household chores. It was indicated to the
recruitment team that many of the young students, especially those from well-to-do Chinese families, were used to having all of those tasks carried out for them by ‘domestic servants’. The parents of those students expressed a preference for hostel style accommodation, in which meals and cleaning services could be provided as part of the fees. The parents of young female students, in particular, sought the residential college style of facility in which there would be separate provision for male and female students - and a degree of overall supervision. They expressed some concern at the other alternatives in both of which male and female students shared houses. They deemed this situation to be unsatisfactory for their daughters. The Melville Centre, just three kilometres from the University, with resident cooks, cleaners and supervisors appeared to be capable of meeting this demand. Vice-Chancellor Boyce (1987), in supporting the University’s bid to obtain the lease, stated: “The collegiate-style living will be particularly attractive to both young country students (from WA) and overseas students who are moving away from home for the first time to continue their education”.

Sometime during the next three months, the Commonwealth Government changed its mind about the method of disposal of the centre and called for tenders to purchase rather than lease the facility. Such a sale would be subject to the leasing back of the medical facilities on the site to the Commonwealth for six months to enable the completion of the treatment of some patients for whom no other adequate arrangements could be made. In early 1987, the university’s tender of $2.75 million for the purchase of the property on its twelve-hectare site was accepted. In announcing the purchase, Boyce said:

*This investment will provide urgently needed facilities which would have cost*
The Senate approved the raising of a loan for three million dollars to acquire the centre and to refurbish it ready for an intake of up to sixty students (Senate resolution 28/87). The Senate recognised that servicing this loan would place significant pressure on the university, but the centre would provide the much-needed student accommodation by the time of the second semester intake. There was also: “Some expectation that the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission will make a contribution to the cost in several years time” (Boyce 1987). Boyce was very pleased indeed with the conclusion of this transaction and said:

_This was another instance of Murdoch’s determination to serve the State’s education and research needs by a self-help attitude. Despite funding cut backs, the University has largely financed its own student housing programme. The Centre would provide the University’s first fully-catered collegiate style student accommodation._

A small management team, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, was appointed to manage the purchase and refurbishment of the residential blocks, the establishment of physical security systems and the care of the grounds. Again, this group was more or less autonomous under the authority of the Vice-Chancellor, with no stated requirement to report or account for its activities to the Senate or other representative body.

Mr Peter Sinden, a lecturer in Commercial Law, was appointed as part-time warden for the Melville Centre and, by the end of July, in time for the arrival of the a new group of full-fee paying international students, he was joined by three resident fellows. The facility was an immediate success and greatly relieved the pressure on the on-campus accommodation. This was, however, to be a short-lived venture. The property was eventually to be sold to the Edwards Business College group for the
expansion of its activities. This was part of the arrangement between Edwards and Murdoch University that was discussed in the chapter on marketing and recruitment. After the sale of the Melville Centre, all of the activities related to the expansion of student accommodation were to be concentrated back at the Murdoch campus in the Student Village.

Developing Student Village

As early as September 1987, the Senate considered proposals that would eventually increase the on-campus housing in Student Village to one thousand beds. In November 1987, the Property Committee brought to the Senate plans for the first stage of the expansion, which would provide accommodation for two-hundred-and-one extra students. The plans provided for a variety of six, five and four bedroom units with an estimated cost of $18 000 per bed. This cost would include furnishings, laundry facilities, games/community rooms and luggage storage space. This figure, was almost $10 000 per bed less than the cost of building more of the eight bed units which had been the standard on the Murdoch campus. The Property committee explained that the smaller units were able to be built to ‘domestic’ building standards with smaller rooms and lower ceilings than the larger units, which were classified as ‘institutional’. The Funding and Staffing Committee put forward a plan for the consolidation of several loans at favourable interest rates to finance the project and the Senate resolved to approve the proposal (Resolution 129/87). When the tender process was completed in February 1988, the actual cost had been reduced to only $14 800 per bed. With great foresight, the Property Committee recommended that the Senate approve further development, using all of the funds in the previously approved budget, rather than reduce the amount of borrowing. This meant that recreation rooms
could be increased in size, three additional blocks would be able to be built for the future, but not fitted out at this stage, and the sewerage system expanded to allow for future growth in the Village.

Though never stated by the Senate, it is clear that much of the expansion of Student Village was to cater for potential full-fee paying international students. Several members of the Property Committee had also been members of the original sub-committee that proposed the entry of Murdoch into the market for fee-payers. Nairn and Dunn, in particular, continued to see the expansion of that program as essential for the future viability of the university. They also recognised the crucial importance of being able to offer readily available accommodation as part of the University’s marketing strategy. Boyce also recognised the contribution that the fee-paying students had made to the improved accommodation facilities at Murdoch. In a statement in the Murdoch News he said: “Without the fees received from overseas students, the recent and proposed major extensions to the students housing village, which caters for both Australian and overseas students, could not have proceeded” (Boyce, 1989).

With the abovementioned extension and another in 1989/90, the number of places in the Student Village had risen to four-hundred-and-thirty by June 1991, when a review of the operation of the Village was begun. Up to that time, the village had been run by a small group of Murdoch’s academic staff and post-graduate students, on a part-time basis. No real policies for such matters as admission and administration seem to have existed in a written form before that time. According to the Director Keith Cook (1995), the Village was originally a loose confederation of flats with no single person
accountable for the accommodation complex. Groups such as the Residents Advisory Group and the Residents’ Association had been formed on an *ad hoc* basis and existed as monitors of the affairs of the Village and the students resident there, but they had had no formal status. As had become regular practice at Murdoch University, the review committee was made up of a small group under the direct control of the Vice-Chancellor. The Committee consisted of the Vice-Chancellor, the Principals of two of the halls of residence of the University of Western Australia, and Murdoch’s Business Manager (with no members of the academic staff or the student body!). It is clear from the report of the Review Committee that all was not well in the Village at the time. There were references in the report to the need for adequate supervision of students during weekends, for the Director to display an unusual degree of cultural sensitivity, imagination and diplomacy and for attention to be given to noise levels, participation in community activities, and general discipline. The committee took advice from the various representative groups on the Murdoch campus and then recommended changes that would bring the whole of Student Village under more centrally accountable control. These and other new directions were set out in the document *The Future of Student Village* (Murdoch University 1991a).

Essential to the purpose of creating more central control was the appointment of a Director who would be full-time in the position. This was seen as preferable to the nature of the previous staff appointments, which had been part-time and very much secondary to the lecturing duties of the incumbents. To further emphasise the importance of the position to the University, the salary of the Director would be set at the top level of the scale for Senior Lecturers. The remuneration package would also include a rent-free flat in the Village. Another staff member, on part-time
secondment, would assist the Director by taking responsibility for the overseeing of
discipline, counselling and the coordination of leisure activities. The responsibilities
of the Director and his assistant, as outlined in the policy document, required them to
ensure that they provided for student participation in the governance of the complex.
Other duties included: maintaining adequate supervision after hours and on weekends,
providing advice to students on academic and personal matters, liaising as required
between students and schools of study or central agencies, and the provision of social,
sporting and other recreational activities. Under the policy guidelines, there was also
provision for the establishment of an advisory committee under the chairmanship of
the Deputy Vice- Chancellor.

When interviewed in 1995, Cook said that several kinds of problems that had existed
before the creation of his position had been overcome and that the Village now ran
very smoothly. The Director’s role had also been expanded to include his
participation in overseas marketing and recruitment campaigns. Cook said that he had
resisted this involvement at first, but had later agreed. He was now convinced that his
inclusion in the marketing team had resulted in better student understanding of both
the nature of the accommodation that was available and the rules governing the access
to it. Also, he said, he had found that the incoming students had been able to
recognise him as a ‘familiar face’ and that this had often made all the difference for
the comfortable settling-in of new students after their arrival at Murdoch’s Student
Village.

The review created a focus for the creation of other policies for the Village. A
definitive statement was made, for example, about the preferred composition of the
student body occupying the facility. It was considered desirable that about fifty percent of the places in the Village be retained for full-fee paying international students and, more especially, for those students in their first year of study. The WPOS reaffirmed this policy decision in August 1989 when it determined that: “The highest priority should be given to first year international students for on-campus housing in view of the increased settling-in difficulties for such students and the importance of re-assurances in housing for potential applicants”. One of the main triggers for this new policy was an embarrassing situation in which sixty students from the July 1989 intake had to be found off-campus accommodation because Student Village was full (Osborne 1989). This incident had caused some students to complain that they had been misled about housing before leaving their home countries - with consequent damage to Murdoch’s recruiting campaign. Because of the limited overall number of places and the rapid increase in the number of full-fee paying international students, the new policy came to mean that students were guaranteed only one year of residence in the Village, after which they must seek alternative places. This led to some initial dissatisfaction, but Cook said that this had been a short-term problem that had been alleviated once students clearly understood that this was the policy before they arrived. The mechanisms that were constructed to assist second and subsequent year students to find alternative accommodation are discussed later in this section.

Another important policy initiative was a move to improve the ‘international feel’ of the Village. Students from the various overseas countries and Australians were allocated to houses in such a way as to create a mixed cultural situation in each unit. It was believed that this would be of great benefit, especially to new arrivals who would
be forced to mix with a wider cross-section of the university population and also have more regular occasions to practise their English. The emphasis was to create ‘living communities’ in which co-operation in all activities, including tasks such as cleaning and cooking, would be essential. Some of the Asian students, in particular, resisted this at first and groups of exchange students from the USA had expressed a preference for being housed together, but the integration of students had proved to be a good idea and was eventually well accepted (Cook, 1995).

A comprehensive policy document was produced and its provisions were included in a Residents’ Handbook provided to all students. In this way, definitive information was available to everyone on all aspects of living in Student Village. Rules and regulations were clearly stated and the mechanisms for their enforcement were made obvious to all.

Another major reason for the assumption of more central control of the administration of Student Village was that of bringing the budgetary situation under greater scrutiny. There was a perception, particularly among academic staff of the university, that the Village was causing a drain on university funds and that those monies could be better used elsewhere. Boyce (1991) believed that the subsidising of the Village should be phased out by 1995:

"Student Village is moving steadily towards budgetary autonomy and full self-sufficiency, with the university subsidy expected to disappear by the end of 1995 at which time a review is undertaken. It is essential that this process continue without a significant increase in student rents or additional levies on the residents."

A future study of the financial outcomes of the Village after the full establishment of the full-fee paying international student program would determine, he said, whether
that position had been reached. Hyde (1990) was also concerned that some care should be taken that the University did not try to make the Village completely financially self-sufficient through the raising of rents and fees. Though the Village was a loss-maker because the rents were too low, he said, it must be considered that feed-back from the students had indicated that the existence of the Village, with its guarantee of immediate access to accommodation for the first year of study, was one of the major reasons for fee-paying students selecting Murdoch over alternative institutions. The percentage of the fees that was set aside for capital works, under the regulations governing their enrolment, should be partly used to fund improvements and also to ensure that rents were kept to a level that was attractive to both international and local students. At the time of this study, Murdoch was maintaining a policy of providing subsidies to maintain rents and fees at an attractive level for prospective customers (Cook 1995).

Off-Campus Accommodation

There is no doubt that Student Village was the most important facet of the provision of housing to full-fee paying international students. However, another very important initiative was the relocation of the Housing Officer from the main administrative area of the University to the office at the Village. The Housing Officer was responsible for assisting students to find off-campus accommodation. This function was of particular importance to those students completing their first year of study, and to the group of older students for whom residence at the Village was not available or not suitable because of family or other circumstances. There were, of course, some First Year students who preferred to live off campus, particularly those desiring lodgings at which meals and other services were provided as part of the rent.
The task of finding off-campus accommodation was made somewhat easier by the entrepreneurial activities of many local residents and of the families of some of the international students (Hurley 1995, Osborne 1994). In two of the nearby suburbs, Kardinya and Winthrop, quite a lot of new housing was being developed at that time. Both Hurley and Osborne believed that a number of those new houses were deliberately constructed with extra bedrooms, often with their own bathrooms, to be marketed as accommodation for university students. Furthermore, Asian families or groups of families had purchased properties in the area for the use of their own children. They recognised that an investment of this nature saved them money while their own children were in residence and could continue to provide returns if the premises could be rented to the children of other families who succeeded them. There was, thus, quite a good supply of both rental and boarding accommodation available in the area near to the University.

One of the roles of the Housing Officer was to set up a register of available positions and to assist students in their selection. Hurley (1995) made it clear that it was the responsibility of students to choose their own places and that her role as Housing Officer was not to allocate them on any preferential basis. This was to ensure that there would be no suggestion of favouritism or conflict of interest. The necessity of such a policy stance can be seen from an exchange of letters in the irregularly published student newsletter *Intercourse* (1988). A letter from students, complaining that Housing Services had not found someone to share their house with them, was published in one issue. In a subsequent issue they received a firm reply stating that it was not the responsibility of the Housing Officer to find co-tenants for them. The reply explained that the reality of their situation was that no one had picked their
house from the register in the office, that was available to everybody seeking shared accommodation. The Housing Officer was there to make the information available and not permitted to promote any particular person’s housing. Many students adopted the practice of advertising the availability of rooms by means of notices on the various bulletin boards around the campus. This gave their facility more prominence than it would get as part of a list in the office. Judging from the number of such advertisements and the level of response, (made obvious by the number of tear-off telephone numbers that had been taken) it is possible that this eventually became the most common method of arranging accommodation in the second and subsequent years of students’ time at Murdoch.

The Housing Officer was charged with the maintenance of a register of three types of accommodation. This register was compiled from responses to advertising in the local community, both by word-of-mouth and through the local newspapers. Students were to be able to consider the alternatives of full board, sharing with a family, or sharing with other students in a house or flat (the latter proving to be the most popular). The service provided by the Housing Officer also included a considerable amount of information about the ‘pros and cons’ of each of the types of accommodation as well as advice that would assist students to avoid contractual and other problems. Comprehensive information sheets and booklets on these matters were readily available in the office. These documents were also made available to prospective students through recruiting agents and other information sources in the students’ home countries. Information sheets were also made available to the providers of accommodation, setting out the probable expectations of student tenants and the legal obligations that the providers must fulfil. The distribution of this information was
made in response to some early problems resulting from a lack of clear understandings of mutual obligations between landlords and tenants (Hurley 1995). The initiative was further developed with the provision to the off-campus providers of standard models of boarding or renting agreements that could be more easily negotiated with students.

The Housing Officer also assisted students to ‘sort out’ any problems that they got themselves into in regard to their accommodation arrangements. While some of these problems concerned rental rates, bonds and similar contractual matters, many more were related to personality clashes between renters and landlords or among students sharing accommodation. By 1992, the Housing Officer was also receiving assistance from a group of students who were employed by Student Village to inspect off-campus locations and to assist international students to settle into their chosen accommodation.

The foregoing account suggests that, from a somewhat hesitant beginning in 1986/87, and some problems in mid 1989, the provision of accommodation for the full-fee paying international students had progressed to being an efficient and effective system by 1992. Writing in *Uni-Abroad*, an irregular supplement to the *Murdoch News*, in February 1992, the Director of Student Village said that he believed that the village provided all of the essential aspects of a home-away-from-home, with emphasis on support and guidance. By that time he was being assisted by two resident Senior Tutors and fourteen trained senior students designated as Resident Advisers. The facility had grown to four hundred beds and plans were in place to ensure that
expansion progressed at a rate that would comfortably deal with the predicted growth in demand in subsequent years.

Food
As most of the full-fee paying international students at Murdoch University would be living in the kind of accommodation in which they must cater for themselves, ready access to food supplies was essential. Osborne (1993) emphasised the importance of meals in the lives of these students claiming that, because there were few other activities available on a regular basis, meals were: “Central to the students’ lives”.

There were no shops selling cooking supplies on the campus, but there was a shopping centre about one kilometre from Student Village. This complex included a large Coles supermarket, as well as greengrocer and butcher shops. However, there were no specialist shops providing for the needs of international students. The supermarket carried a basic selection of Asian food requirements, but did not have the variety of vegetables or dried condiments which the students may have required. It should have been possible for members of the WPOS to meet with local shopkeepers in the same way that they had met with the landlords or neighbours of the students. However, interviews with Murdoch staff do not indicate that any special arrangements had been discussed with the stores. There was also a Chinese restaurant in the Kardinya shopping complex, but this would almost certainly have been too expensive to cater for the everyday needs of students. The nearest significant group of speciality food stores was some fifteen kilometres away in Perth City. The city and the stores were fairly easily accessible by public transport. Staff from Student Village thought that students did make this trip from time to time to stock up on essentials not available elsewhere. There was also some belief, though the staff reported this as purely
anecdotal, that the students had adapted their eating habits to include a significant
degree of western style cooking and ‘fast foods’.

Students from Singapore and Malaysia, who comprised the great majority of the full-
fee group, would have been used to eating out on a regular basis. The tradition of
eating at small restaurants or food markets is well established in those countries
because the cost of both ingredients and labour makes this an economically viable
practice. Eating out was also an important opportunity for people to get out from the
small units that families typically occupied in those countries. It would be expected,
then, that students from those countries would be seeking to take at least one of their
meals each day at the university’s refectory, which at that time was the only food
outlet available to students on campus. One of the common items of negative
feedback from the earliest groups of full-fee students was the poor standard of the
food that was available to them from that source. In the early years of the full-fee
paying international student program, the caterers who held the contract for the supply
of meals in the refectory refused to make any concessions to the tastes of international
students (Osborne, 1993). And it was not just the lack of anything other than standard
Australian cafeteria food like pies, sandwiches and limited hot dishes that was the
source of the complaints. The students reported that the food was most commonly
overcooked, dry and unappetising. For the most part, this was due to the practice of
preparing all of the food in advance and leaving it standing for long periods in
warming trays. Fortunately, a change of caterer in the refectory and some competition
from the social club/tavern that was run by the student Guild brought about a ‘quiet
revolution’ in the variety of meals available. According to Osborne, when the
frequent requests to the refectory caterers to ‘lift their game’ went unheard, the
Guild’s social club employed some of the international students to work in their kitchen, where they could cook meals that would be attractive to their peers. This had proved to be very popular with both local and international students and had greatly boosted the general trade of the social club. Osborne said that this had created the pressure that had brought about the new menus that had been established by the caterers who had taken over the management of the refectory. My personal experience with the food outlets in the 1990s showed that a variety of inexpensive and delicious meals, many with an Asian influence, had become available, particularly in the middle of the day.

Transport
Apart from an initial problem with a shortage of sufficient seats for students to return home at the end of the year, there seemed to have been no particular problems with transport in and out of Australia. The problem was brought to the attention of the WPOS early enough for the committee to negotiate extra places with QANTAS (Murdoch University 1987c). With the passing of time, flights to the most common destinations became more frequent anyway in response to the demands of business and tourism. The situation was made easier by the fact that the peak times for international students’ travel were in February and November. These were ‘shoulder’ periods for the airlines, being just before and just after the local school holidays. This allowed Qantas to make more capacity available when it was needed for students. The upgrading of the Student Travel Association office from one to three days per week in late 1989 also helped students to obtain flights at better prices.
Because many of the students were housed either on campus or within comfortable walking distance, the provision of local transport for students received no special attention from the University. Regular bus services, that provided access to the local communities surrounding the university and their facilities, operated along South Street, the major road at the front of the University. These services also connected with others that enabled students to travel further afield, to Perth or Fremantle, for example. At peak time some buses actually arrived and departed from a designated stopping place within the campus.

Like all students, those who could afford to do so purchased motor vehicles. This was most common, according to the Director of Student Village, among those students living in off-campus accommodation. Cook (1993) said that it was quite common for a group of students to own a vehicle in partnership. Vehicles were also sold on by departing students to new arrivals, especially to those going into houses owned by overseas investors. It was not uncommon, Cook said, for the same car to have been owned by several successive groups of students at a particular address! Vehicles had presented no real problems for the University in spite of some limitations on parking space. Transport, in general, had never been among the concerns expressed by international students.
CHAPTER SEVEN:
TEACHING AND OTHER ON-CAMPUS RELATIONSHIPS

Teaching And Learning

Clearly, the central reason for full-fee paying international students attending an overseas institution is to gain an academic qualification that will give them significant advantages for employment when they return home. The best service that an institution can offer to these students is a high quality of instruction designed to enable them to learn effectively and efficiently. Indeed, it would seem to be essential that universities which recruit full-fee paying international students, not only provide good teaching, but also assiduously seek individual or small group solutions for any problems that do arise.

A great deal of money has changed hands and many overseas students have placed themselves in a high-risk position, with a fear of failure looming large in most minds. Overseas students have a compelling need to succeed academically and the university has a moral duty to teach effectively and enable them to learn.

(Elsey 1990)

However, it soon becomes apparent, from even a brief survey of the relevant literature, that there is a wide divergence of opinion as to the best way to deal with the academic requirements of this group of students.

‘Deficit’ Models

One school of thought about the teaching of international students is that their learning abilities and study skills are in some way deficient, so that institutions must carry out structured remediation to overcome their problems.

Pedersen (1983) claimed that there were learning adjustment problems inherent in the personalities of the students because of their cultural/traditional backgrounds. Asian
students, he asserted, were accustomed to authoritarian teachers who used lecturing and dictation as the main forms of instruction. In such classrooms, there was no questioning of the teacher and little laboratory work or independent research.

Success in Asian systems, according to Pedersen stemmed from observation, memorisation and replication. Because of this background, international students looked upon their Australian teachers as being “dangerously informal” in their persistence in the practice of raising questions and leaving students to find the answers. They encouraged students to engage in questioning and criticism and to participate, with original contributions in seminars and tutorials. This, Pedersen said, was beyond the abilities of the students. Bignell (1994) agreed that students had this perception of overseas teachers. He said that the students in his Science classes in Singapore had treated with some suspicion his efforts to engage them in experiments in which the outcomes were speculative. The students wanted ‘the answer’ in nice structured notes and were reluctant to take part in what they considered time-wasting exercises like conjecture, evidence gathering and analysis.

Channell, writing of experiences in the UK, found a great deal of concern among Asian students about the rather open-ended nature of the writing/assignment tasks that they had been set. Students thought that it was the task of the lecturer to give them more structured details of how to complete the work. Many students, with a Confusion style education, were over-reliant on their lecturers for guidance and advice, often “placing them on a pedestal”, and expected personal rather than group tutorials. Meleis (1982) also found that international students demonstrated over
reliance on the lecturer being the expert claiming that this was: “Only surpassed by their belief in the absolute authority of the written word”.

Interestingly, Channell found that the international students at her institution expected to be mixed with local students in tutorial groups. In fact, they were even quite happy for this to occur. This was contrary to expectations, and Channell admitted that it was possible that institutions may have some stereotypic views of the characteristics of international students - a point to which the discussion will return later in this section. (Channell also gave a warning about using the ‘standard’ practice of forming tutorial groups by alphabet, thus inadvertently constructing groups containing all of the Chins or Nguyens!)

Many other writers have presented lists of similar learning problems as being characteristic of all international students (Meleis 1982, Lansdale 1984, Beecham 1986, Savage and Briggs 1986, Bilbow 1989). To overcome these problems, which were supposedly inherent in international students, Ballard (1986) recommended that institutions should provide specific short courses or tutorials to overcome what she defined as “academic deficiencies”. International students would, therefore, need instruction in a wide range of topics such as: how to develop an argument or consider a point-of-view; the writing of reports and analyses; summarising; reading beyond the text; comparing theories or methods; and constructing an argument based on acceptable evidence. Plagiarism, Ballard, said will certainly occur and should not be ignored. Students must be shown not only that the practice was unacceptable, but also how to avoid it. In this view, Ballard was supported by Cottrill (1988) who wrote:

*Students found it impossible to imagine that there was no single correct*
answer to an essay topic and that those students who did well in the assignment were interpreting a number of diverse views. Since the truth was expected to be revealed in the writings of an expert, and students are, by definition, not experts, it follows that plagiarism was a major problem.

To achieve the desired changes in student learning behaviour, the teacher must also change. A list of the most common advice compiled from the various sources cited above would suggest that the teacher should:

- Specifically explain the methods that should be used, and why they were acceptable, so that students develop as “independent learners”.
- Present materials more slowly at the beginning of a unit.
- Use examples that draw upon the background understandings of the students.
- Use plenty of visual aids and handouts - especially for difficult concepts.
- Not take the lack of feedback or questioning from students as indicative of full understanding.
- Explicitly teach such skills as laboratory techniques, use of equipment, library systems, acceptable styles of referencing etc. etc.

One would have thought that teaching in this way would be good practice for staff members in their dealings with all students, not just international ones!

In a later work, Ballard and a colleague acknowledged that there was a danger of “mutual stereotyping” between students and lecturers, because they did not all, in fact, display the same learning/teaching behaviours (Ballard and Clanchy 1991). They warned that both should beware of misunderstandings that:

- Lead students to believe that lecturers: were racist, lacked rigour, didn’t give enough instruction etc., and
- Lead lecturers to believe that students were: lazy, plagiarists, pushy etc.
Ballard and Clanchy considered that specific tutorials should be given, focussing on such topics as methods of learning and how to read texts. This was contrary, as will be shown later in this section, to what had become the mainstream view: that these topics are best treated in the context of the students’ studies.

Developmental Models

A growing number of researchers has found that deficit models project an unsatisfactory pictures of the learning abilities of international students.

_In this context, it is more appropriate to examine South-east Asian students’ approach to learning from a developmental perspective than to try to identify hypothetical deficiencies in their study characteristics. A developmental; perspective acknowledges the importance of educational and cultural differences in academic requirements across countries, institutions and even disciplines…Adopting the notion of adjustments to a given educational system rather than making value judgement on the educational system of a student’s home country is probably as important for the academic staff of the institutions hosting these students as it is for the students themselves._

(Volet and Kee 1993)

Students entering a new learning environment are inevitably faced with problems of adjustment. This is not exclusively a concern for fee-paying students. Australian school-leavers often find the flexibility of study formats at universities very different to the more structured educational practices that they have experienced for many years at school: “Australian secondary education is not a preparation for tertiary study, but a path to it” (Burns 1991). However, problems are exacerbated for students entering tertiary education for the first time in a foreign country.

The greatest cultural problem faced by incoming students is the risk of cultural stereotyping: for example “Indians are not generally engineering minded” or “Chinese are the most reliable and hard-working” (Channell 1990). This can lead to
an immediate breakdown of mutual understanding when a full-fee student enrols in what may be seen by staff to be an atypical course. It is important for staff to understand the cultural backgrounds of students, seeing them both as products of a particular social environment and as individuals. In the same way, it is important that course designers and teachers take care with the relevance of their materials and examples for their international students. In the Commerce area, for example, the traditionally used Australian economic models might bear little or no resemblance to the realities of, particularly, a third world country. A similar source of problems may be the assumption of familiarity with localities or cultural artefacts. One student related to me her quandary in an elementary Statistics course in which many of the examples referred to a ‘standard pack of cards’. To this student, the question: “Find the probability of dealing five hearts in a Poker hand”, was incomprehensible!

It is important also, for staff to be constantly aware of the concept of “face”, especially in Asian society. Students may feel undervalued and even unwanted if a staff member is “too busy” to see them and written criticism on assignments, seen as constructive by tutors and local students, may be taken as a personal attack (Beecham, 1986). The simple act of asking some students an unexpected question in class can be a cause of very great embarrassment to them and a significant loss of face if they do not know the answer (good teachers would recognised this as a problem for Australian students as well). Students brought up in a culture in which the teacher is considered to be always right might not ask a question for fear that the teacher just may not have the right answer and will thus be caused to lose face (Pedersen, 1983). However, as is discussed below, there may be other reasons for such behaviour and teachers should be wary of adopting a stereotypic view of student behaviour. The problem of “face”
can also arise between students, with many international students knowing that they are seen as too conscientious and anti-social and not being sure how to proceed. Consider the plight of “H” who, in a letter to the editor of *Intercourse* said, “I’ve got assignments piled up to my nostrils, but am afraid to turn down party invitations for fear of being labelled “kiasu”. The, probably unhelpful, reply was, “I guess it depends on whether you prefer to be labelled “kiasu” or “failure”.

Volet and Renshaw, in their study *Cross-cultural differences in university students’ goals and perceptions on study settings for achieving their goals*, strongly questioned the stereotypic belief that Asian students are mainly pre-occupied with fulfilling their lecturers’ expectations and memorising information for tests and examinations. They found that the South East Asian students in their study gave higher usefulness ratings to study settings which involved interaction with teachers and peers than to lecturing. They also observed that international students quickly adapted their goals and study methods to the context in which they were studying; and after less than one semester, these were largely indistinguishable from those of local students.

Chalmers and Volet (1997) presented a very strong case against stereotypic views of the study methods of international students. They described five major, widely held misconceptions about South East Asian students studying in Australia:

- “South East Asian students are rote learners who adopt a surface approach to learning”.
  
The study found that these students did spend a lot of time in rote learning, but it was so that they could better understand the information. That is, “Memorisation precedes understanding, but is necessary for it”.

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This view was supported by Biggs (1999), who found a clear distinction between ‘rote’ and ‘repetitive’ learning. Biggs said that: “Successful international students engage in the latter so that they understand better - but appear to be rote learning to the unobservant teacher”. Ramburuth and McCormick (2001) also concluded that the evidence from their study: “Refutes, to some extent, anecdotal and stereotypical claims in the literature suggesting that international students from Asian backgrounds employ more surface approaches to learning than Australian students”.

- “South East Asian students are passive learners and do not participate in class” Chalmers and Volet found that these students were often quiet in class, but that did not equal passivity. Many of the students did not want to draw attention to themselves by asking what they perceived to be unnecessary questions. They felt that Australian students: “Asked too many, too simple questions”. There was some evidence that language problems may have contributed to a reluctance to play a more active role in tutorial situations. Biggs (1999) found that the passivity applied to only some students. Indian students, for example were often more talkative than local students. Biggs claimed that it was up to teachers to make it clear that speaking out in class was acceptable: “If there is tacit permission to talk in class, then they will do so as enthusiastically as they do in the coffee shop”.

- “South East Asian students stick together and do not want to mix with local students”.

Chalmers and Volet found plenty of evidence during their study that this was not the case. Often the students expected to mix and wanted to do so, but were inhibited by lack of opportunity to do so. Channell (1990), Barker (1991) and
Mullins (1995) all discovered this same willingness and expectation by international students to mix with local students. Factors such as language difficulties, ‘choose your own’ tutorial groupings, and lack of a positive approach by local students, militated against the formation of mixed groupings. Biggs (1999) claimed that the lack of mixing was not really a problem anyway, because observation had shown that better learning took place in more homogeneous cultural groupings.

- “South East Asian students lack the skills for analysis and critical thinking”.

Chalmers and Volet said that some students did indeed have lesser skills than they required for success. However, the students all expected to be called upon to do these things, were willing to learn and adjust and were not concerned about their ability to do so. Many other students already had high levels of skill in these areas. Ramburuth and Mc McCormick also found that there was considerable diversity in the learning style backgrounds of international (and local) students.

- “South East Asian students do not easily adjust their learning to the Australian context”.

This was shown clearly to be a misconception in the case of most students. This study, as well as that of Volet and Renshaw (1995) showed that these students were able to make any necessary adjustments in a very short time. Biggs (1999) found that Asian students studying in the UK also adapted readily to their new learning context. There were some adjustment problems that were caused
Of special significance to my study is the report of research by Volet and Kee (1993) of Singaporean students studying at Murdoch University. They found that the background experiences of the students varied widely. Some were accustomed to very directed, authoritarian teaching, while others had a significant level of experience with more participative styles of learning. In some cases, individual students had experienced various styles of teaching in their schools, dependent on the type of unit being studied. Regardless of their background, the Singaporean students were all highly motivated to succeed and aware of the kinds of skills that they would require to achieve their goals. For these reasons, they expressed and demonstrated a willingness to adapt quickly to their new learning environment.

The adaptations that were most generally needed were caused by lack of experience of many of the students in the areas of:

- Taking personal notes rather than receiving handouts or copying from overheads.
- Participation in group discussion.
- Editing their written work for correct English usage. (Volet and Kee said that the students had seldom been ‘marked down’ in their written work for poor grammar or spelling.)
- Extended writing with the correct use of referencing systems.

Like many other researchers, Volet and Kee (1993) recommended that these potential problems be dealt with in a developmental manner. That is, the required skills should be identified and then strengthened in the context of the unit being studied.

*It is argued that taking useful lecture notes in a particular course, for example, is intimately linked to the nature of the knowledge that is taught, the teaching style and the type of study materials available for that course...Inducing first year students’ development of content-relevant learning strategies within the*
context of a discipline is the most effective way to ensure that those skills will be perceived as relevant and ultimately applied by all students. The stigma attached to study skills courses can then be avoided.

It should be assumed that the students already have a high level of skills due to their previous successes (that resulted in their very presence in the university’s courses) and teach them to adapt their skills to their new situation. This approach also better enables teaching staff to gear the development of skills to meet individual differences as opposed to the approach in separate courses that assume that everyone is at the same starting point.

The findings of Volet and Kee (1993) concur with those of others researching in the field:

We find that teaching international students develops in the same way as teaching generally, from a level 1 “blame-the-students” view of teaching to an inclusive level 3 view that engages students in effective learning whatever their ethnicity. (Biggs 1999)

Our study not only draws attention to the learning diversity in Australian tertiary classrooms, but also points to the need for learning institutions and their teaching staff to become more sensitive to students’ learning style preferences, and differences that may exist, in order to maximise student learning. (Ramburuth and Mc McCormick 2001)

While acknowledging that the above problems should be of concern to universities and their staff, it is important to remember that most of the problems cited above are also very prevalent in the study skills of local Australian students. Many years spent in Western Australian secondary schools with senior students have shown them to have very great problems with the same areas quoted by the sources. Contrary to their beliefs, most of the teaching in our schools is of the declamatory style with little scope for genuine analysis on the part of the students. As in other countries, success is
measured by the gaining of good marks in tests and examinations, in which the ability to remember and reproduce the fact and opinion passed to them by their teachers is most important.

These observations were supported by those of Colin Beasley (1994) and Lorraine Marshall (1994) from ESTR, who both said that the study skills problems presented by full-fee students were similar to those of local students. Simone Volet (1993b), who has researched the skills of both local and full-fee students, said that the skills being discussed were, in fact, university level skills that were developed in that context rather than being learned at school. She said that a study of note taking by a Murdoch colleague in local schools in the late 1980’s had shown that the students had little competency in this skill and that it was not being taught in the schools.

According to Volet and Kee (1993) the Singaporean students in their study were aware that they lacked many of the study skills that would be required for success at Murdoch University. They were aware too of the differences in their backgrounds and previous educational experiences compared with those of local students. They were, according to Volet, ready to be shown the skills and background knowledge needed to put them on the path to success.

English Language Competence

Of all of the diversity within classrooms, the area most explicitly concerned with international students is that of English language facility. Most of the studies reported in the literature found that the majority of international students have at least some problems with their English skills (Beecham 1986, Lansdale 1986, Bilbow 1989, Ballard and Clanchy 2001). These problems occurred regardless of the students’
backgrounds or the level of their other academic skills. Burns (1991) said that a lack of language facility was the main problem faced by First Year international students in Australia: “Even those who have good skills have problems with accent, idiom etc”.

Ballard (1987) found that the service most heavily used by international students at the Australian National University was the Language Centre. Students wanted help with both their reading and their writing and often took a long time to make real progress. Ballard said that more help should be given to the students and that the language assistance should be: “Continuous and co-ordinated with the actual material to be covered in a course”.

Teaching And Learning At Murdoch University

The most obvious and predictable problem that could be faced by the full-fee paying international students at Murdoch would be a lack of sufficient facility in the use of English. The University took great care to set admission standards that would reduce the potential for significant problems in this area. Murdoch was, in fact, accused of setting standards that discriminated against private providers of English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS). Holloway had written to a recruitment agent in Seoul stating:

As far as I am concerned, a student who needs to study ELICOS for university purposes should do so at a recognised university or CAE and can then apply to us for admission after completion of ELICOS. We will not issue any more conditional offers of admission. (Holloway 1988c)

This letter drew an angry response from the ELICOS association of Western Australia:

The eight independent members of the W.A. Elicos Association are astonished that Mr. Holloway should discriminate in the way he has in the letter, between institutions which are equal in the eyes of DEET and DILGEA. We are all accredited in exactly the same way as the non-private centres referred to by
Mr. Holloway. If the implication is that private ELICOS institutions are less capable of teaching English for Academic Purposes, we take strong exception. (Milner 1989)

In his reply to Milner, Boyce denied that Murdoch was discriminatory, and asserted that the University had a right to set its own admission standards. Further, he said:

*It is the accepted practice of most tertiary institutions in Australia that overseas students applying for admission should complete an objective, impartial and universally-recognised test of English ability. These tests include GCE ‘O’-Level English, TOEFL, IELTS and STOS. I understand, however, that most students completing a course at a private ELICOS institution do not present any of the foregoing certificates.*

To assist in maintenance of high standards, the Western Australian Tertiary Institutions Service Centre agreed to conduct a formal test for international students to confirm the accuracy of the certificates that they had presented (Murdoch University 1987a).

Because of the close scrutiny of the English language ability of applicants and the fact that most of the students, especially those from Singapore and Malaysia, had either been taught in English or had their English lessons from expatriate English speakers, lack of facility in the language never became a significant problem at Murdoch. The Mid-Semester report from the ESTR Unit, for the first group of full-fee paying international students in 1987, revealed that of those students who had been identified during orientation as being in need of some assistance in English less than fifty percent had actually attended any of the classes set up for them. And, there had not been any noticeable repercussions of this. ESTR staff member, Colin Beasley (1992), said that the expected large demands for ESL assistance had never eventuated. Most of the full-fee students who had presented for assistance had come with non language-related problems, very similar to those of local students. The exception had been some students with difficulties adapting to Australian slang. Other staff, including
Professor Alan Davison (1994) and Dr Simone Volet (1993b) reported a similar picture of the situation. However, some concern must remain that the minority of students not from English-speaking backgrounds like Singapore and Malaysia, or similar educational environments, may have experienced significant language problems that they were not prepared to acknowledge, for fear of being stigmatised by such an admission.

For the reasons outlined above, during the period covered by this study, there was never a very strong ‘push’ to establish a facility for the teaching of English as a Second Language on the Murdoch campus. In March 1988 it was suggested that an English Language Institute be established at Murdoch with the object of attracting pre-university English language students who could then enrol at Murdoch at the end of their courses (Murdoch University 1988b). However this suggestion was not taken up by Murdoch. The reality of the situation was that Murdoch was really too small to take the financial risks involved in the setting up of an English language school in opposition to the well-established institutes operated by the UWA, the Senior Colleges, the Colleges of Advanced Education and some private bodies. The risky nature of such a venture would have been emphasised by the collapse of several small private schools that catered for international students in Perth, but were unable to cope with rising costs and currency fluctuations. When it became highly likely that Murdoch would be amalgamated with the UWA in 1990, there was an expectation that the ELICOS facility at the UWA would serve both institutions (Holloway 1988c).
Other Learning Skills

The Australian Industry Commission (1991) reported that there was a general lack of flexibility and adaptability on the part of institutions to meet the problems rising from the different learning styles of international students. At Murdoch University, as elsewhere, there was little or no systematic effort to provide full-fee paying international students with the kinds of learning skills outlined in the literature. ESTR was asked to provide some ESL classes for students during their orientation and to offer follow-up sessions during the semester. These latter classes were, however, poorly attended, with students expressing the concern that attendance at such courses would detract from the time that they had to spend on their ‘real’ studies (Beasley, 1994). Beasley said that the ESTR unit had suggested that they set up and present special skills classes in the context of the students’ courses. They believed that this would be seen as more relevant to the students. An example of such a course, which could have been taken by both full-fee and local students, would be a study of the specialised language required for Commercial Law. This and similar suggestions were not acted upon, he said, because the Schools believed that they were providing sufficient training to the students. With the earliest groups in particular, however, little had been done to assist students to understand and adjust to the types of learning, discussion and presentation skills needed for success in the various courses that they were taking. Many of the students that came to ESTR for assistance with their studies had required these higher level skills rather than language-based problems that they were expected to display. The ESTR staff had provided handouts for students and some short individual sessions to cover such topics as methods of effective reading, note taking, correct structures for different types of written presentations, advice about
the avoidance of plagiarism (and the penalties for it) and pointers about good examination technique.

Marshall (1994) expressed the view that ESTR had been ‘loaded’ with a good deal of extra work because of the full-fee paying international student program and that the unit had received no recognition or recompense for their substantially expanded role. In fact, though the situation had obviously not been made clear to staff by the manager of the unit, ESTR did receive the same five percent funding bonus from the full-fee receipts that was being provided all Schools as an incentive for them to become involved in the program.

Staff Development

In general, the academic staff at Murdoch University seemed to have shown little interest in gaining new skills for the management of full-fee paying international students. For example, the Western Australian College of Advanced Education arranged a seminar on the problems of teaching international students in April 1987. However, Volet (1993b) said that she was quite sure that no Murdoch staff had attended. Similarly, a presentation at Murdoch University by Brigid Ballard, an acknowledged authority in the area, was attended by only two staff - one of which was Volet.

Professor Alan Davison (1994), head of the Commerce program, said that nothing special had been done initially for the full-fee students in regard to language or study skills problems because there was a belief that such matters would be dealt with by the International Office. He said that he thought that he and all of his staff probably had
the usual stereotypic view of what international students would be like, and had accepted that they would not take part in discussions or reference their work properly etc. They had become aware that more needed to be done in the area when they examined test and examination results. Given that the students had at least as good entrance standards as local enrollees, their early results indicated that they were not achieving the results expected of them. This had led to the provision of a mentor for full-fee students within the School and the gradual development of better resources for teaching and learning. In addition, Davison said, the multi-media marketing laboratory set up by the School, with the assistance of funding from the full-fee paying international student program, had provided a facility that was “second to none”. This had been of great benefit to both international and local students.

The wider use of a mentor system might have helped to overcome the kind of problem expressed by a First Year Commerce student in a letter to the editor of the student magazine *Intercourse* in March 1990. She said that she had problems understanding the accent of her Australian lecturer. The good advice from the editor was to bring it to the notice of the lecturer, who most likely would not have even realised that there was a problem.

It is most probable that staff at Murdoch University perceived few problems arising from lack of language or study skills because the characteristics recorded by Volet and Kee (1993) as typical of Singaporean students, were also displayed by the other students. Murdoch had taken great care that the entrance standards, both academic and English language, were more than adequately met by the full-fee students that they enrolled. Volet and Kee had found that the students displayed high levels of
motivation and a willingness to find ways to improve their study skills. With solid academic backgrounds and an ability to adapt, these students were unlikely to have real difficulties in adapting to university life in Australia. On the contrary, follow-up studies by ESTR and a group called the International Student Contact Persons showed that all full-fee students in the early intake groups had passed their courses, usually with “B” or higher grades. It seems probable that the observed success of the students led those concerned with their learning to believe that they did not need any different treatment to that of the general population of students.

Graduation And Beyond

A final service that was provided to the full-fee paying international students was a pre-departure re-orientation to the cultures to which they were about to return. These were set up at the suggestion of Holloway, who Osborne (1993) describes as the most ‘culturally sensitive’ of the staff involved with the international students. Students had quickly adapted to the easy, liberal way of life of their Australian counterparts and it was felt that there was a risk of significant problems on their return to ‘more controlled’ cultural environments. This was felt to be especially the case for female students returning to countries in which Muslim beliefs defined behaviour. They were reminded in the debriefing sessions that freedoms of dress and association, particularly with male students and staff, that they had experienced in Australia, were not the accepted norms in their home countries. Simon Avenell, the Director of the Study Abroad program at Murdoch said that even students from places like the USA had to have re-orientation sessions to ensure that their time as students at Murdoch did not lead to cultural misunderstandings on their return home. However, Ho (1998) discovered that Asian students’ values and outlooks had not changed as much as some
people thought they would during their university studies. The students served as ‘control mechanisms’ for each other, watching for behavioural changes in their friends and helping to ensure that they did not become too individualist or westernised.

Post-graduation contact was maintained with international students by the formation of alumni associations in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur in 1992 (Murdoch University 1992d). These proved to be very successful ventures with fifty and two-hundred-and-forty graduates attending dinners in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore respectively. The dinners were also attended by high profile guests from the region. This raising of the profile of Murdoch University in their home region and the provision of a structure for support and information sharing assisted the students, both in the process of re-establishing themselves in their societies and in their prospects for employment. The University benefited from the establishment of these groups in that they enhanced its reputation in the area and the alumni members often volunteered their assistance in the counselling of prospective students. A ‘graduate dinner’ in Hong Kong is also mentioned but no further details were given (Murdoch University 1992d).

The cycle of recruitment through to graduation was completed in September 1993 when Murdoch University held its first overseas degree-granting ceremony in Singapore. About one hundred and fifty graduands from several countries received their degrees from the Chancellor, Sir Ronald Wilson at the ceremony at the Regent Hotel. This was followed by a Graduation and Alumni Dinner that gave the newly graduated students their first opportunity to make contact with the many Murdoch graduates living and working in Singapore.
Welfare And Relationships

The welfare or ‘well-being’ of students is dependent on many factors. Some of these have already been discussed: orientation, housing, food, good teaching etc. However, even when all of these services are in place, there are on-going provisions that must be made to ensure that students are supported during their stay at the their host university.

In its Code of Ethical Practice, the Australian Vice-Chancellors’ Association directed that: “Institutions should encourage a supportive environment.” The post-enrolment features of such support should include:

- Professional counselling services which will:
  - promote the successful adjustment by international students to life and study in Australia;
  - assist students to resolve problems which could impede successful completion of their studies.
- The development of resource directories to meet specific needs, e.g. accommodation, medical, dental and legal.

Burke (1994) argued that: “International students are both similar and different to local students. Because of this, they require specialist services in addition to those provided to all students on campus”. On most campuses, special provision had been made for orientation, language and learning problems and for advice on administrative matters. Because it would be impractical to have counsellors from every cultural background, international students were most often expected to use the counselling services available to all students on a campus. Burke said that this was not necessarily a bad practice:

Indeed when discussing certain issues some individuals prefer to speak to someone outside their own culture or ethnic community, since they are concerned about confidentiality or expectations of “right behaviour”.

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Fortunately in dealing with most issues it is sufficient for the helper to have a general appreciation of culture - an understanding of the ways in which cultures vary and the effects this can have on communication and behaviour.

Burke observed that international students were reluctant to use professional assistance, partly because this was a foreign concept not present in many Asian societies. However, the main reason stemmed from their similarity to local students rather than their differences. Like Australian students: “Their first preference is to try and deal with the problem themselves”, only resorting to the unknown professional when their own resources, friends and family are exhausted. Because of this, Burke said, counsellors should make sure that they are well known to the students by taking a high profile position at orientation and any other early gatherings of international students.

Meleis (1982) also stressed the need for students to get to know all of the people with whom they would be dealing before: “Getting down to business”.

Lewins (1990) found that international students had a greater need for personal counselling than local students - especially in the early stages of their studies. The problems that they presented differed very little from those of local students: “Except that the overseas students who did suffer problems tended to do so more intensely. Especially from anxiety about being rejected or left out and striving for perfection”.

At Murdoch University, the policy regarding the provision of welfare services was determined by the WPOS in December 1987. Speaking at the meeting, Dunn said:

*The position of the Overseas Student Officer should essentially be concerned with pre-entry (recruitment, admissions processing entry) and that as a general rule, existing sections and personnel should be used to service the*
needs of full-fee overseas students, rather than set up a separate, overlapping entity concerned solely with full-fee students.

A ‘Secretary’s Note’ at the end of the Minutes, reveals that further discussion had taken place and that the first day of teaching each semester would be regarded as:

The demarcation line between the Overseas Student Officer at Murdoch and the Community Services Section. Mr. Holloway will be responsible for recruitment and admissions processing and orientation - with assistance in the latter function from Community Services. Community services would have responsibility for accommodation and general student welfare during the academic year.

In spite of the apparent clarity of this policy, Holloway reported at the end of 1989 that, although most of the counselling had been carried out by two established counsellors: “I am increasingly being approached for advice and help in various matters” (Holloway 1989a). This was of course due to the high profile that Holloway had gained with the international students and not really unexpected. This sharing of the counselling was allowed to continue on an informal basis until the establishment of the International Office. Paul Melloy then became the Overseas Student Adviser with a role mainly concerned with pre-departure and orientation activities, but with time to address the problems of students that lay within the range of his capabilities.

The other very important service that was available to all students on the Murdoch campus was that of medical assistance. At first this was provided by a Nursing Post, with the nurse referring serious cases to local doctors. Later, the service was expanded to include the services of a GP on-campus. From this facility students were also able to obtain advice about, specialist medical, dental and other services that they might require.
Relations Between Students

It is essential that an institution with international fee-paying students understand the potential difficulties that can arise through poor relationships between the students and those people with whom they come in contact. It is very common for international students to be housed together in blocks of flats or “villages” that keep their off-campus life very separate from the rest of the student body and the local population in general. This can be a very lonely situation for those who are not introduced to even their neighbours. Kinnell (1989) suggested that there was a real need for some body within the institution to take responsibility for creating opportunities for these students to meet others from both the local and international student groups.

A common misunderstanding, often held by both the host institution and the students, is that the student is there “just for the qualification” and that other people are irrelevant to this goal. This ignores the fact that many of these students are still teenagers who have lived all of their lives in a family situation. In many cases this would have been in an extended family. Female students from some parts of Malaysia may have come from very protected backgrounds indeed. There is a very real need for mutual support groups to which the student can build a natural affiliation to replace family and friendship networks left behind.

The nature of the relationships between students on Australian campuses is not very clear. It appears to vary widely from campus to campus and from year to year. Savage and Briggs (1986) reported that international students had commented on the “general unfriendliness of Australians”. Smith and Morley (2002) found that a group of students completing a course in Australia in 1999 allocated a high level of
satisfaction for the “general friendliness of Australians”. However, the study revealed that there were some problems:

There were some criticisms, however, in relation to the level of interaction between Australian students and international students. Many students felt that they had not had sufficient opportunity to communicate cross-culturally. There were also several comments about racism in Australia.

Nesdale and Todd (1993) studied the issue of intercultural contact by interviewing both Australian and international students. Both groups viewed the other as “not unfriendly”, but both groups also spent the majority of their time with members of their own ethnicity. The international students said that they would have preferred more cross-cultural contact to improve their overall experience in Australia. A study at the Western Australian Institute of Technology in 1986 also found that Asian students perceived a “lack of acceptance” by their Australian classmates (Acott 1986c).

Baker et al (1996) also found that: “Positive views on the cultural benefits associated with international students on Australian Campuses were held by both domestic and international students”.

A study by Volet and Ang (1998) found: “Little reason for students to dislike each other”, but they tended to stay in their own groups because:

- It was easier to communicate in their first language.
- Asians view Australians as not serious or dedicated enough to their studies.
- They liked the ‘comfort zone’ of customs and expectations.
- Australian students had more off-campus activities and so did not mix with the Asians who tended to be confined to the university environment.
In general, the students in this study said: “I would not go out of my way to work with them, but I would not mind if I was put into a group with them.

By contrast, a study by Romm et al revealed a strong frustration on the part of international students caused by their inability to make meaningful contacts with Australian students. Their expectations had been that they would gain much through cultural interaction during their time in Australia, but they found that they had been treated with indifference by most Australian students.

Relations Between Students And Staff

Some problems in the relationships between staff and students are likely to arise because of a mutual lack of understanding of the academic and cultural differences that sometimes exist in overseas’ approaches to the teaching/learning relationship. There were several suggestions in the literature that some students would tend to have unexpectedly high respect for, and expectations of, staff, especially their assigned lecturers and tutors (Pedersen 1983, Kinnell 1989, Channell 1990, Biggs 1999). Because of this, there might be a tendency for students to turn to staff for help with everything from study problems to family matters. (Interestingly, Ballard (1986) found the opposite to be true of a group of students at ANU, who almost always preferred to keep their problems “in the family of their peers”. ) Such attention and esteem would be likely to make most Australian staff members quite uncomfortable. Furthermore, the extra demands made by these students might lead to a perception that international students were “hard work”, leading to reluctance by staff to offer courses attractive to international students (Elsey 1990).
There appeared to have been few manifestations of these problems at Murdoch University. To a great extent, the high quality orientation programs and the emphasis placed on the central role of the International Office staff prevented the occurrence of significant problems between students and staff. Contrary to there being reluctance on the part of staff, they often showed some preference for classes with significant numbers of full-fee paying international students, viewing them as highly motivated and success oriented. In general, then, according to both Tan (1993) and Holloway (1994) the staff attitude towards international students was very positive. The full-fee paying international students filled up classes and created new ones, giving rise to stability of employment and reducing concerns about the on-going viability of courses. The fee-paying students were seen as intelligent and hard-working and thus welcome additions to classes.

Racism

Many studies of the experiences of full-fee paying international students studying in Australia reveal that they had met with some form of racist behaviour. A number of writers have seen this as a manifestation of a national problem. For example, Savage and Briggs (1986) described: “A general unfriendliness of Australians towards people of different ethnicity”. Castles (1992) asserted that: “Australia has a long tradition of racism towards non-Europeans, and a similar sentiment was expressed by Sullivan and Gunasekaran (1992). One has only to consider the long existence of the White Australia Policy and the even longer period during which Australia’s indigenous people were not counted as citizens, to realise that there is some truth in these assertions.
In regard to the experiences of students, Shinn (2001) wrote:

The perception of racism within local Australian culture was clearly a concern for many international students. Even if they had never experienced a racist event themselves, many had heard stories from Asian friends, which negatively influenced their impressions of Australians.

A student from the University of Wollongong, who took part in a study by Romm et al in 1994, indicated that racist incidents had not actually occurred on the campus: “It was the people outside, in shops that seemed to be hostile because I am Asian”. However, Makepeace (1989) said that racism often occurred on university campuses. It was often very difficult to prove that incidents had happened because they often took the form of insidious comments to individual students: “Why can’t you eat food that doesn’t smell so much?” and “Overseas students like you take the places of Australian students”.

The document Corporate Strategies (Murdoch University 1987e) contains the statement that: “The University will take all necessary steps to discourage the emergence of racism on campus, and take active steps to encourage assimilation of overseas students”. This showed that the WPOS was clearly aware of the potential for this problem to have negative effects on campus. Indeed, a significant argument of some of the opponents to the original proposition to enrol full-fee international students had been the perception that these students would take the places of qualified students from Western Australia. Holloway (1994) recounted some instances of international students reporting that they had encountered racism, while he was a member of the staff of the International Office at Murdoch University. However, he said that there was a fairly low level of occurrence of the problem and that it did not cause any real concerns for most of the international students. He said that his own observations, and studies carried out by the International Office staff, had revealed a
quite low level of inter-racial conflict on the campus. The racism or intolerance that
did exist was, he claimed, not aggressive in nature. Incidents that he had been aware
of had been short-lived and soon corrected. The international students, he said, were
largely unconcerned and philosophical about the occasional incidents that had affected
them.

Holloway also suggested two significant reasons that he believed had reduced the
probability of racial problems at the institution. The first of these related to an
unusual feature of the population enrolled at Murdoch University. Examination of the
patterns of student demographics had revealed a larger than usual proportion of
mature-aged students at the university. These students could be expected, he said, to
display little animosity towards the fee-paying students because they were not in
competition with them for places. Also, because they were of a different age range,
they were unlikely to have much out of class contact with them. A second factor,
Holloway claimed, was that there was a much lower level of unfulfilled demand for
university places in Western Australia than in other parts of Australia. As observed
earlier, this was particularly true of Murdoch University at the time that the option of
enrolling full-fee paying international students was accepted. Thus, the feeling that
the fee-payers were taking the places of Western Australian students was not a
significant feature of the situation at Murdoch University. The same low incidence of
racist events was also reported by Boyd (1993), Holloway’s successor as director of
the International Office.

The international students themselves also supported the perception that the incidence
of racism at Murdoch University was at a low level. Anthony Iheakanwa, a student
from Nigeria, who was President of the Murdoch University Guild of Students for part of 1990, said that he had found less evidence of racism in Perth than in any of the many other foreign cities that he had visited. He said that there had been no complaints to the Student Guild from any of the thirty-two African students on the campus. There were many similar endorsements of the generally friendly treatment received from Perth people and, in particular, from the students and staff of Murdoch University, to be found in official university publications and the various student newsletters. (See, for example: Supapong-Pickate1990, Karube and Fujimoto 1990.).

Conversations with fee-paying students during the period 1992-1996 revealed a similar view of Murdoch University as a safe and unconfrenting campus for international students.

It cannot be said, however, that there was no problem at all with racist attitudes and actions at the university. There was a general reluctance on the part of many staff and students to discuss the matter “on the record”, but there is some evidence, from interviews with staff and students, personal observations on campus, and in the published public record that problems did exist in the relationships between the full-fee paying international students and members of the local population. One of the presidents of the Student Guild in the 1980s (who would not be cited) stated that the Guild was aware of a small but persistent problem on campus. He said that the Guild was to take part in a campaign, in concert with the other tertiary institutions in Western Australia, that would attempt to deal with the problem. Shortly after this conversation, posters that urged students to STAMP OUT RACISM appeared on the noticeboards around the university. There did not appear to be any other specific
activities organised as part of the “campaign”. If they did occur, they received no mention in any of the various campus publications.

The Minutes of the Guild Secretariat revealed very few references to the problem of racism on campus. Most of the actions that were taken appeared to be rather ‘token’ in nature, with little or no follow-up.

- There was a flurry of discussion about racism at three meetings held in April 1990, but this related to problems being experienced by Aboriginal students on campus, not international students.
- A motion: “That the Murdoch University Guild of Students join People Against Racism”, was passed without dissent at the September 1991 meeting. There was no record of any further involvement with the group.
- The Minutes of July 1, 1991 reported an incident of racist behaviour by one of the staff in the refectory. Guild Secretariat member Dilum Dassanayake said that she would take the matter up with the International Staff to see what could be done about this and other allegations of racist behaviour by staff members. There was no record of a report back to the Guild from Dassanayake, or of any further action on the matter.

Conversations with other students confirmed the existence of a small, on-going presence of racist behaviour. The most revealing physical evidence of this was the graffiti that appeared throughout the campus. The outer walls of the buildings suffered only a few minor attacks of this form and they were quickly removed so as not to encourage other students to take part in similar activities (Tan 1993). Unfortunately, the same concern was not shown for the accumulation of scrawl in the
toilets (at least the Gents’) around the institution. A line such as, “All Asians are D……s” soon gathered rebuttals and further insults from both local and international students, often with increasingly unsavoury language. One wall, in the Library’s facilities in late 1991, had an area approximately two metres by one metre covered and re-covered with words and diagrams of a racist nature. Apparently, the removal of the offending material was the responsibility of either the cleaners or the maintenance staff, but it was some months before the matter was attended to. It is not possible, of course to gauge the extent of the participation in this form of vilification. It could well be the work of a small group of regular offenders on both sides of the argument. In their national study of student relations, Harris and Jarrett (1990) claimed that the existence of graffiti in no way represented a significant level of racism on campus: “Despite the graffiti on some toilet walls - and it is not certain that these are all student authored - the evidence suggest that overseas students have not engendered attitudes of racial intolerance by Australian students”. It is possible that the observation that the students were “philosophical” about the matter is an accurate picture of a situation in which the majority refused to be offended or affected by an obviously unhealthy minority.

There is some evidence that the relations with the community outside of the university were more of a problem to the full-fee paying international students. In a contribution to Intercourse, Dassanayake (1990) listed the various types of discrimination that she had experienced around the city: name-calling, lack of service, and lack of any attempt to understand her. These incidents had occurred off the campus and, in particular, in the central area of Perth city. Stanley Eu, the editor of Intercourse in 1989, said that some of the racist behaviour experienced around the city and on
campus was partly the fault of international students like himself: “We treat Australia as our own country, not giving a care to whether we offend them by speaking our native tongues in front of them”. Similarly, Rajkumar and Ahmad (1991) claimed that the problem of racism had been exacerbated by the actions of a few international students who had given the group a bad name. They cited some examples of this:

- Landlords had refused to rent to international students because some had wrecked their flats just before vacating them.
- Car rental firms were reluctant to rent to international students because a few had charged the costs to credit cards, which they then cancelled, and left for home.
- Telecom had instituted a bond of $250 for international students because several had left Australia leaving large unpaid bills.
- Libraries had caught international students attempting to steal books.

While these are interesting perceptions, most of the racism experienced by international students was more likely to have been engendered by the prejudice of the local population than the behaviour of the students.

There is no doubt that Perth was perceived to have problems of a racist nature, and that they indeed existed. Marketing and recruitment staff from Murdoch reported that they had seen articles about racism in Western Australia in newspapers in Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia (Murdoch University 1989a). A report compiled by the Western Australian Office of Multicultural Affairs and released in July 1989 was widely quoted in the media of South East Asia. The Straits Times of 24th July 1989, for example, carried an article highlighting the worst examples that had been revealed by the report:
Western Australia has been branded a racist state, where life was a nightmare for many Asians and Aborigines. Both groups live in fear of violence, sexual harassment, intimidation and even murder. According to the report, issued over the weekend, intimidation and abuse occurred daily - on the street, in shopping centres, at school and at work.

Arson attacks and fire bombings of six Chinese restaurants this year were also documented in the report. Sexual harassment of Asian women by Australian men occurs regularly, the report said.

This was indeed the time of very high activity by the National Front, the leader of which was convicted of many racist offences and imprisoned shortly after the publication of the report. The report and the reaction to it in South Asia brought a swift response from the Western Australian Government:

Since Australia’s economic prosperity today depends on co-operation with its Asian neighbours, racism is a serious political concern. Western Australian Premier Peter Dowding had to hurry to Singapore to explain that racist incidents were isolated, and no reason not to invest in his state. (Castles 1992)

The problem of bad publicity was exacerbated for Murdoch University by comments made by the Guild President, Paul Stevenage. A report of an interview with Stevenage appeared in the Straits Times and the New Straits Times on July 28th 1989. Stevenage was quoted as saying that racial violence would erupt on local campuses unless authorities took urgent action to stop the increasing flow of Asian students into Australian universities, including Murdoch. He said:

The problem is that the rapid jump is just too much for some of our Australian students to handle, especially those who have brothers, sisters or friends whom they regard as having missed out on a place because of overseas students. I have heard such local students saying, “They are taking our places” and “They are taking our jobs”.

Stevenage expressed a belief that Australian students were not racist, but continued: “However, the perception is that the Asians are ‘the enemy’... it is a communication problem”. He then described the evidence on which he had based his belief that racial
tensions had increased at Murdoch: “Bus shelters had been painted with slogans attacking Asian nationalities. I have also heard some unconfirmed stories about some limited fighting between Asian and Australian students”. One is left unconvinced that the problems of Perth City actually intruded to any great extent onto the University campus. Nevertheless, the article resulted in Murdoch staff being asked several questions about the level of racism at Murdoch during visits of the next “roadshow” to cities such as Ipoh, Merang and Kuching. A letter from Murdoch’s agent in Kuching highlighted the problems for recruiters:

_This unfortunate issue was taken up by the local press and have badly damaged everybody’s efforts to attract students to study in Western Australia by highlighting its safe, pleasant and tolerant multi-cultural social environment. We can say, without doubt, that we have lost some potential students to Western Australia as a result of this very adverse publicity on a highly sensitive issue._ (Wee, 1989)

Wee continued his letter with a commendation of Murdoch for its prompt response in attempting to contain the damage. This response consisted of the implementation of a set of actions proposed in a paper written by Russell Elsegood in August 1989. The main thrust of the campaign was to be an article in the Murdoch News:

_Detailing all the contributions overseas students make to Murdoch University - culturally and economically. The article is to make clear that far from denying places to Australian students, the overseas students’ fees contribute significantly to Murdoch’s ability to employ more staff and provide new and improved facilities for all students._

The article was published in the September Murdoch News for the benefit of local students and staff and copies if the article and other publicity were circulated to the media both in Western Australian and overseas. Mr Wee’s letter indicated that this approach had helped to restore confidence that students would be safe at Murdoch.

Over the years Murdoch University developed a number of mechanisms for the rebuttal of racial stereotyping and the relief of possible racial disharmony on its
A significant part of its orientation programs for full-fee paying international students was the introduction of the new students to the staff and local students at the University. The Host Family Program gave the students the opportunity to mix with local families and their children and a number of social events were held throughout the year to bring together local and international students. Reports of the annual “cultural day” in the Murdoch News were always positive and stressed the participation of the local students in the activities:

*The centrepiece as always was the collection of food stalls from which overseas students served delicacies they had cooked using recipes from their home countries. Entertainment included performances by a Cambodian orchestra and Spanish dancers. An Australian bush band, Fiddlers Green, not only played their music, but also successfully persuaded overseas and local students to get on to their feet and join in a bush dance.*

(Murdoch News 1991)

The Vice-Chancellor initiated a practice in which representative groups of international students visited him for morning tea, giving them direct access to discuss their problems if required. Bodies such as the Overseas Students Association also attempted to solve problems of intolerance between the various groups of international students, which sometimes brought their differences from their home countries with them. Holloway (1994) said that a constant, low level of friction between students from Singapore and Malaysia had resulted in several attempts to form breakaway groups such as the Malaysian Students’ Association. These had been resisted in the early days, but such specialised groups did form, at various times during the 1990s, without appearing to disturb the harmony of the campus.

On balance, it appears that the problems with relationships between international students and local students and staff have always been at a fairly low level at Murdoch University. There is no doubt that a degree of racism exists within Western Australian
society and that it has manifested itself, often violently, from time to time. However, these events have occurred mainly in suburbs remote from the University and from those in which the bulk of the students dwell. The evidence from the staff, local and international students at Murdoch itself indicated that, though any level of intolerance was unacceptable, the problem was not a significant hindrance to the well-being and success of the full-fee paying international students.
1974 was a watershed year for Australian university education. The newly elected, zealously reformist Whitlam Labor Government had committed the Commonwealth to assume responsibility for the total funding of universities, in return for the abolition of tuition fees for students by the State Governments. This policy change ended a long tradition of extensive State Government involvement in the funding of university education. At the time of the Commonwealth assumption of total responsibility, the States were contributing about thirty percent of the cost of the universities (Universities Commission 1975). Having been relieved of this burden, the States have never shown any interest in resuming any level of responsibility for financial support. Even when Commonwealth funding levels for universities dropped dramatically in the later 1970s and the 1980s, the States could not be persuaded to take up any of the ‘slack’.

Also at an end, for the time being, was the students’ partial funding of their own education. In 1973 this contribution represented about ten percent of the total cost of Australia’s university sector. The abolition of tuition fees by the Whitlam Government was to make it politically difficult for later, cash-strapped governments to reimpose them - though ironically, it was a future Labor (Hawke) Government that did so! A further significant consequence of Whitlam’s removal of tuition fees was that it extended free education to non-scholarship international students who, up to that time, had been paying tuition fees at the same level as their Australian counterparts.
In this new environment, with its expectation of continuing, bountiful Commonwealth funding, Murdoch University opened for business. One could not blame the Western Australian State Government or the Murdoch University Planning Board for having high hopes for a sound foundation and a bright future for the fledgling university.

The Study

The research questions guiding the study were:

- *Why* did the University find itself in such an adverse financial and developmental position that the implementation of a full-fee paying international student program became a priority for its decision-makers?
- *Why*, in spite of some strong initial resistance, did the full-fee initiative so readily make the transformation from an opportunity to a set of Murdoch policies and practices?
- *How* were the crucial decisions that put the new policies and practices into place made?
- *How* were those policies and practices implemented in the Murdoch context?

Thus, this study has examined the responses of Murdoch University to the less than favourable circumstances that it experienced when successive Commonwealth Governments severely reduced its income. It has also highlighted several other factors, emanating from the foundation and early development of Murdoch, that contributed to the deterioration in its financial circumstances and stagnation in the growth of its student numbers. The study then follows the development of policies and practices that emerged at Murdoch University in response to the opportunity to
enrol full-fee paying international students under policy and guidelines initiated by the Commonwealth Government in 1985.

Another major contribution of this study is that, in addition to providing an overview of the impact of globalising economic forces on Commonwealth and State government higher education policies in general, it examines the effects on internal university policy-making at Murdoch University in particular.

Chapter One is a literature review that serves two purposes:

- It provides the essential background at international, national and institutional level for an understanding of the circumstances that prevailed at Murdoch University in the mid 1980s.
- It shows the position of the study in relation to other studies that have preceded it.

The review demonstrates that Australia and its institutions were subjected to the same effects of globalising forces that were being experienced worldwide. A number of contributors to the literature expressed the belief that the effects of globalisation appeared much earlier in the Australian political and economic arenas than in many other countries.

A major effect of globalising forces was seen to be the adoption by governments, including at both Commonwealth and State levels in Australia, of neo-liberal economic philosophies. This led to growing deregulation by the central government of areas in which it had traditionally played a strong controlling role. Most notably this applied
to the financial market, trade and the so-called ‘welfare’ areas including health and education. The Commonwealth reduced the level of its financial commitment to tertiary education on the basis that in a ‘modern’ (neo-liberal) state, individuals, not governments were responsible for their own welfare. In such a state, there was little place for programs aimed at the removal of socio-economic disadvantage; individuals must demonstrate their own strength of character and persistence. The establishment of such an environment saw the rise of an emphasis on concepts such as ‘user pays’, ‘markets in education’ and the private funding of many other areas that had been traditionally funded by governments.

One of the other consequences of globalisation, apparent from the literature, was the rise of an expectation that education would become a more direct contributor to the economic well-being of the nation. One of the ways in which this could occur was for universities to develop a role in the ‘export of education services’ to international students. This study builds on the existing literature by bringing together several threads and applying them to an analysis of the situation that existed at Murdoch University at the time. Thus, the crucial roles played by senior Labor Government figures such as Hawke, Walsh, Ryan and Dawkins are examined in the light of the pressures confronting them due to the economic circumstances under which they assumed office in 1983. To this is added the significant influence of the reports of several committees, established by the previous conservative government, which reported to the Hawke Government early in its term in office. The development and realisation of the policy enabling universities to enrol full-fee paying international students is asserted by this study, to be a major result of the accumulation of these effects.
Little has been published about the establishment and development of Murdoch University. The only major work is that of Professor Geoffrey Bolton (1985), *It Had Better Be a Good One*. Bolton’s analysis of the problems that beset Murdoch University in the first ten years of its existence suggested that they were due to both the Commonwealth Government’s influences, described above, and to some fundamental errors that occurred during the planning of the University. This study continues and extends the themes apparent in Bolton’s work. I was able to ‘fill out’ the picture of the Western Australian community’s rather negative initial view of the University from my own experiences as a school administrator in a nearby school, and as a student at the University in the 1980s and 1990s. Bolton’s book covers the period to the end of 1984, so it has no coverage of the crucial role that was to be played by Vice-Chancellor Peter Boyce in changing the administrative structures and practices at the University in a way, that this study contends, allowed for successful adoption of the full-fee paying international student opportunity.

There was only one article, by Stone (1987), that analysed the Yanchep International Campus Proposal. This present study examines that project in more detail. It shows that the Western Australian Labor Government of the time was subjected to similar globalising forces as those experienced by its contemporaries elsewhere. Thus, it was very supportive of any opportunity to improve the state’s export performance and strongly supported the export of education services. This study also contains a more detailed coverage than that of Stone of the on-campus debate that culminated in the withdrawal of Murdoch University from the separate campus Yanchep proposal, and in the University community’s subsequent decision to become actively involved in a full-fee paying international student program.
A major new contribution that this work makes to the literature is that it uses the case of the full-fee paying international student program to examine the development of policy and practice at Murdoch, as it responded to the vulnerable situation in which it found itself in 1985. It argues that Murdoch successfully adapted to the new, economically harsh economic circumstances imposed by successive Commonwealth Governments. However, to a large extent, it did this at the cost of abandoning the very democratic, participative style of governance established by its founders, in favour of a more centralised, market-oriented administration.

Before turning to the research questions and the main conclusions of this study, it remains to remind the reader of the broad structure of the work.

Chapter Two establishes the Australian national context in which Murdoch University was established and developed. Successive Commonwealth Governments were faced with the problem of funding an expanding tertiary sector in the face of adverse economic circumstances. A burgeoning university age population, and the adoption of policies in which universities were expected to play a greater role in the national economy, led to a very large increase in demand for university places. At the same time, a global economic downturn placed enormous pressure on national budgets and balance-of-trade figures. This chapter analyses the way in which Commonwealth Governments adapted their policies to deal with the circumstances in which they found themselves. Some emphasis is placed on the roles played by Australian Prime Ministers and other senior Cabinet members such as Ryan, Walsh and Dawkins. This chapter also analyses the influence on government policy of several major educational and foreign aid reports made to the Hawke Government in 1984, and the subsequent
The development of the policy and legislation that allowed the enrolment of full-fee paying international students in Australian universities.

The foundation and development of Murdoch University was the focus of Chapter Three. The study demonstrated that the planning for the new university was based on overly optimistic predictions of the rate of growth of demand for university places in Western Australia. Other ‘errors’ were made by the planners in regard to the location of Murdoch and the promotion of the University as being ‘alternative’ in its philosophy and practice. The changing nature of the style of administration of the University, reflected clearly in the changing attitudes and roles of successive Vice-Chancellors, was an important aspect of this part of the study.

The externally driven policy proposal for the Yanchep International Campus of Murdoch University was the focus of Chapter Four. As well as describing the proposal, the study carefully examined the reactions of staff and students at Murdoch University, and of other stakeholders such as, Tokyu (the developer) and the State Government. The extensive debate that took place, on and off the campus, paved the way for both the rejection of the International Campus proposal, and the acceptance of the principle of enrolling full-fee paying international students on the Murdoch campus. Another important focus of this chapter was the crucial roles played by the members of the International Campus Task Force and the Hill Committee in the making of the key decisions.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven were devoted to the realisation of the full-fee paying international student program at Murdoch University. A major contention of these
chapters was that the style of administration that had evolved at the University by this time was conducive to the effective development of the program. The chapters traced the evolution of the program, from the formation of the Working Party on Overseas Students, through the marketing of the program and the recruitment of students, to the services that were provided to them after their enrolment. In particular, they examined the development of the policies and practices that were necessary to ensure the success of the program at Murdoch University.

The Research Questions

We now return to the key research questions that have driven this study and offer concise conclusions derived from the research.

Research Question One:

Why did the University find itself in such an adverse financial and developmental position that the implementation of a full-fee paying international student program became a priority for its decision-makers?

The causes of the parlous situation of the University were found to lie in two areas:

- The changes to Australia’s education policies that occurred, particularly at the Commonwealth Government level, during the 1970s and 1980s.
- The nature of the planning and early development of the University itself.

Australia’s education policies of the 1970s and 1980s were strongly tied to the impact of globalising forces, the social and economic philosophies of successive Commonwealth Governments, and to the playing out of those philosophies in the face
of deteriorating trade and budget deficits. From the point of view of this study, the first crucial period was that following the election of the Whitlam Labor Government in 1972. After a confident beginning, the Whitlam Government found itself with increasing financial woes. The cost of its education and other social reforms spiralled upwards rapidly, at the same time that Australia’s overall economic position deteriorated, leaving the Government in the position of having to significantly reduce its promised expansions.

By the time that the conservative Fraser Government assumed control in 1975, large budget deficits and a worldwide economic downturn had led to a financial crisis. The Fraser Government, through the Lynch ‘Razor Gang’, implemented savage cuts in government expenditure in all areas - including the slashing of spending on tertiary education by more than one third over the period 1975 to 1983. This combination of factors had disastrous consequences for newly established universities such as Murdoch.

As shown in Chapter Two of this study, it was the policies of the Hawke Labor Government that had the greatest effect on the reduced financial circumstances of Australian universities. It was believed that the recovery of industrial health depended on an influx of university-educated personnel into the workforce. To achieve this, the Commonwealth Government planned a large, nationwide increase in university places. To secure the extra funding required for an expanded university sector, the Government turned more and more to private sources of finance. It encouraged universities to compete for the available government funding and to become more entrepreneurial in seeking investment opportunities in the private sector.
The situation at Murdoch University was exacerbated by some burdens placed upon it during its planning, foundation and early development. The report that recommended the establishment of the new university contained unrealistically high predictions of the level of demand for university places in Western Australia in the 1970s and 1980s. These figures led to the creation of a new university with a very low population within its proposed catchment area. Where growth did occur, much of it was due to projects catering for families in lower socio-economic circumstances. As discussed in Chapter Three of this study, such families usually had no tradition of sending their children to university and were reluctant to make the financial commitment required to support their children while studying.

The University’s situation was made even worse by some of the philosophies espoused by the Murdoch University Planning Board and by the first Vice-Chancellor and his foundation staff. Many of the ideas proposed and enshrined in the University’s policies were sufficiently different to the ‘traditional’ view of university education to deter many students from enrolling there. From the perspective of potential students and their advisers, Murdoch appeared to be too ‘alternative’. The planners set out to establish a ‘general studies’ approach to the first year of study, with specialisation to follow in later years. Many of the highest achieving secondary students and their parents saw this as a rather ‘soft’ approach. The uncertainty caused by some of the course descriptions at Murdoch made it even more difficult for the University to recruit students.

Because of Murdoch’s early lack of growth, it was often seen as a somewhat impermanent institution. Indeed, as described in Chapter Three, several attempts
were made to merge Murdoch with various other Western Australian tertiary institutions. These public perceptions of Murdoch further eroded students’ confidence about enrolling at an institution with an apparently uncertain future, or in courses that might not be able to be offered in subsequent years.

Thus, by 1985, Murdoch University was in desperate need of both money and students to ensure its future as a viable entity. University administrators were aware at that time that the Commonwealth Government was planning further changes that would make their situation even worse. It is not surprising, then, that an opportunity to gain both students and funds was greeted with enthusiasm by them. Education Minister Senator Ryan’s announcement of the new policy to allow universities to enrol full-fee paying international students, and to have full use of that fee income, must have seemed extremely attractive to the University leaders who understood the extent of its problems.

Research Question Two

Why, in spite of some strong initial resistance, did the full-fee initiative so readily make the transformation from an opportunity to a set of Murdoch policies and practices?

Senator Ryan’s announcement in July 1985 was followed closely by the proposal being made to Murdoch for it to take part in the Yanchep International Campus project. By December 1985 the University had decided that it would begin planning for the enrolment of its first full-fee paying international students in Semester One 1987. The final announcement of Murdoch’s withdrawal from the Yanchep venture
was not made for a few more weeks, but it was clear in December that the enrolment of fee-paying students on the Murdoch campus was the preferred option of the University community. This was a remarkably short time for such a far-reaching decision to have been reached, especially in light of a decision-making process that Boyce had described a year earlier as subject to “sluggish bouts of consultation”.

Part of the reason for the relatively short time in which the decision eventuated is to be found in the reforms that Boyce had initiated in the decision-making processes at Murdoch University after he became Vice-Chancellor in late 1984. As outlined earlier in this study, globalising forces had begun to change the face of university administration throughout the world by the mid 1980s. Earlier Vice-Chancellors had gradually made changes to the administrative structures at Murdoch in response to these pressures, but it was Boyce who set in train the process that centralised most of the responsibility for decision-making. Because of the changes described in Chapter Three, Boyce was able to personally appoint both the International Campus Task Force and the Hill Committee to examine and make recommendations on the Yanchep proposal. These small sub-committees were able to collect the opinions of a wide range of interest groups in a short time, bypassing much of the slower formal consultative processes that had previously existed at the University.

Professor Hill’s committee was given a very short time in which to assess the educational and philosophical merits of the proposal. This meant that consultation had to be on an informal, even personal, basis because there was certainly no time for the Committee to wait for a response from each of the many representative bodies on campus. A written survey, which was proposed for distribution to all staff, was never
circulated because the Hill Committee was called upon to make an even earlier response than it had expected, in time to be included in the Task Force’s Interim Report in December.

Another important factor that hastened the process of making this decision was the intensity of the debate that occurred both on the Murdoch Campus and in the public arena. Each of the major interest groups pursued its agenda so strongly and persistently that the Murdoch community was quickly cognisant of the cases for and against both the Yanchep proposal and the principle of the sale of educational services. Furthermore, the members of the Task Force were, on the whole, committed to both the Yanchep proposal and the enrolment of full-fee paying international students. Nairn, Chairman of the Task Force, said that its expression of support for the proposal ensured that a full debate about the principle of enrolling full-fee paying international students took place (Nairn 1992).

Stakeholders from outside of the University also ensured that there was intense public attention given to the proposal. Premier Burke, Education Minister Pearce and Hatt, the head of EXIM, all made sure that the topic of the export of education services was constantly brought to public attention.

The opposing forces were martialled mainly by the executive of the Murdoch University Academic Staff Association (MUASA). This group submitted its opposing opinion to both of the sub-committees, as well as directly to the Murdoch administration. They also ensured that the public statements of political figures, like Pearce, were countered in the public media. The focus of the opposition’s campaign
was the Yanchep Campus proposal rather than the principle of full-fee paying international students. Like many other observers, the MUASA executive believed that the Yanchep campus would inevitably be transformed into a separate, private university. MUASA’s case is presented in Chapter Four of this study. When Academic Council came to make its decision about the principle of enrolling full-fee paying international students, its members had experienced a short, intensive exposition of the arguments for and against the proposal. The influential Hill Committee had reported in favour of the principle of the sale of education services to students. The enthusiastic support of the members of the Task Force for the enterprise would also have carried significant weight in the final decision-making. This combination of a streamlined decision-making process, the enthusiasm of the advocates of the initiatives, and the intensity of the debate, led to a positive decision in a remarkably short time frame.

Once the decision had been made to proceed with a full-fee paying international student program, the same efficient planning and decision-making processes, referred to above, began again. Boyce retained the International Campus Task Force, simply renaming it as the Working Party on Overseas Students. The WPOS was to report its progress directly to Boyce, who undertook to keep Academic Council and the Senate informed about its deliberations. Again, the group was given a relatively short time in which to complete its planning. If students were to be on campus by Semester One 1987, less than one semester was available to the WPOS to have policies and procedures in place to start marketing and recruiting in the second half of 1986. The same combination of enthusiastic, committed decision makers, who were given a large
degree of autonomy and a tight schedule, again enhanced the progress of the formulation of policies and processes at the University.

Research Question Three

*How were the crucial decisions that put the new policies and practices into place made?*

As recorded in Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven of this study, a few of the most important decisions about the full-fee paying international student program were made by Academic Council and the Senate. For example, both bodies approved the initial policies and structures, proposed for the program by the WPOS, in June 1986. There was some concern expressed by a few members of the Senate, but Boyce used his influence to convince them not to oppose the setting up of the program. There was a greater involvement of the peak decision-making bodies in the establishment of the agreement with the Disted organisation. There were serious concerns about possible dangers to the reputation and finances of the University, and several, more refined proposals were considered by successive meetings before approval was given for the signing of the agreement.

Where approval for new staff or proposed budgets was needed, proposals were taken to the Senate by the Vice-Chancellor and, almost without exception, were passed without extensive debate. Clear examples of this can be seen in the account of the establishment of the Overseas Office and its evolution into the International Office (and eventually Murdoch International). The Senate and Academic Council also became involved when it was necessary to amend the University’s Statutes (as in the
case of the Edwards Business College agreement) or when the purchase or disposal of assets was concerned. However, examination of the Minutes, and discussions with some of the participants, revealed that proposals from the WPOS, the Vice-Chancellor, the Property Committee and similar bodies were usually passed with little debate or dissent. In a considerable number of the examples discussed in this study, the Senate and/or Academic Council were really just asked to give ‘official approval’ to actions that had already taken place.

In general, then, most of the decisions about policy and practice were made by the WPOS, its successor the International Affairs Committee and other powerful committees, in conjunction with the Vice-Chancellor. The role of the major representative bodies, Senate and Academic Council, became more consultative than decision-making. Very few matters were referred to groups outside of these major committees. The participative, collegial approach espoused by the University’s founders had been replaced by an increasingly centralised, but perhaps more efficient, structure and process, founded on the influence of the Vice-Chancellor and other senior members of the Murdoch administration.

Research Question Four

*How were those policies and practices implemented in the Murdoch context?*

Chapters Five, Six and Seven of this study demonstrated that Murdoch University successfully implemented a very effective and productive program for full-fee paying international students. This implementation began with an, ultimately, highly effective marketing program.
The University’s first marketing programs followed the commonly accepted practices of placing newspaper advertisements and attending education fairs in major South East Asian centres. The University’s planners soon realised that personal contact and word-of-mouth recommendation were far superior methods of advertising. While continuing to use the media and to attend fairs and ‘roadshows’ Murdoch also adopted techniques that placed more emphasis on personal contact. Visits to matriculation colleges became a major focus of marketing visits to many cities - especially in Singapore, which was a major market for the University. While some universities had problems in their use of local agents for recruiting purposes, Murdoch was able to use this system to its advantage by providing training to its agents in South East Asia, thus creating a knowledgeable and competent recruiting arm based on personal contact in the students’ home cities.

The formation of relationships with overseas institutions represented another opportunity for Murdoch. The establishment of ‘twinning’ arrangements with universities in South East Asia meant that many students in those institutions became aware that some of their peers were studying courses that would be completed at Murdoch. This established a significant Murdoch ‘presence’ in the local community, and this was reinforced by the usually favourable recommendations of returning successful graduates. In main centres like Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, Murdoch extended the effect of this type of publicity by holding graduation ceremonies in those cities.

The marketing and recruitment policies and practices of the University were very successful. By the early 1990s Murdoch had achieved its aim that ten percent of its
enrolment should be full-fee paying international students. At that stage, the program was providing close to ten percent of Murdoch’s income. There were criticisms that a too high proportion of the students were from Singapore and Malaysia, but these sources showed no sign of ‘drying up’ at the end of the period covered by this study. The successful establishment of Study Abroad programs, mainly with North American universities, also provided an increasing number of students over the years.

Services To Students
As discussed in Chapter Six of this study, Murdoch showed a great facility for innovation and adapting its policies and practices to improve its provision of student services to its international full-fee paying customers. There were problems with the provision of sufficient on-campus accommodation for new full-fee paying international students in both 1987 and 1988. These difficulties were overcome by a vigorous building program and a policy change that guaranteed places in the Student Village to incoming First Year students. To assist students who could not be accommodated at the Village in their subsequent years at Murdoch, the University provided a Housing Officer, whose services were also available to those students who preferred off-campus accommodation. As the on-campus facility grew, further policy changes saw the provision of a full-time Director of Student Village with sufficient powers and staff to ensure that graduating international students would be able to report favourably about their experiences with accommodation while at Murdoch.

Other services were initially provided to Murdoch’s full-fee paying international students by a small group of staff who assisted the members of the Working Party on Overseas Students. Murdoch’s decision makers soon realised that the University must
provide staff that were specifically dedicated to the task of providing services to its international students. The appointment of an Overseas Officer was followed by more staff allocations over several years, leading ultimately to the establishment of an exceptionally effective International Office. The success of the International Office throughout the years was due in great part to the relative autonomy granted to it under the policies formulated during its establishment. Accountability was provided by the requirement that the Office report its activities to a senior member of the administration. During the period covered by this study, this was the Vice-Chancellor.

Beyond 1991
In 1991, there were 744 full-fee paying international students at Murdoch University (Murdoch University 2004). They represented about ten percent of student enrolments and their fees made up about seven percent of the University’s income for that year. Seventy-nine percent of the students were from either Singapore or Malaysia. The only other significant, though relatively small, numbers were from China and Hong Kong, North America and Indonesia (totalling about thirteen percent of the international student population at Murdoch).

By 2004 the on-campus population of international students had grown to almost two thousand, which was about sixteen percent of the University’s enrolment (Murdoch University 2004). Financially, the University had benefited greatly from the program, which now contributed almost twenty percent of Murdoch’s income (Martin 2004).

The overwhelming reliance on Singaporean and Malaysian enrolments had been partly redressed with their total numbers falling to just over fifty percent of international
enrolments. There had been significant increases in numbers from the USA, Canada, Europe and Africa. New offshore programs had been created: “In a cautious and businesslike manner” (Martin 2004).

According to Professor Gary Martin, the Pro Vice-Chancellor Strategy, the University aimed for further growth in the program. Professor Martin said that it would be difficult to achieve significant growth in on-campus enrolments due to the fact that the ‘traditional’ sources in South East Asia were themselves now attempting to become providers of education to international students, especially to those from China. Expansion in the European and North American markets was being hampered by the closure of IDP’s offices in those areas as IDP concentrated its marketing efforts into Asia.

One of the major changes in marketing had been a concentration on what Professor Martin called ‘articulation’ with overseas institutions. The articulated approach creates a pathway from overseas institutions’ courses into Murdoch’s through credit given for the students’ overseas studies towards a Murdoch degree. Visits to overseas institutions had continued to grow in importance, as had other forms of personal and word-of-mouth advertising.

Another new source of potential international enrolments was Murdoch College, a private secondary school established on the Murdoch University campus. This school, another example of Murdoch’s entrepreneurial flair, had attracted a large number of international secondary students and was expected to create a ‘flow on’ effect for the University.
Concluding Statement

The opportunity to enrol international students on a full-fee paying basis was embraced enthusiastically by a group of Murdoch’s senior administrators. They built a strong case for the University to become involved in such a program and were supported by the findings of a representative staff committee. The centralised management structure that had evolved under successive Vice-Chancellors in the 1980s enabled a small group of planners to swiftly initiate a program for full-fee paying international students at Murdoch University in less than one year.

Though there were, initially, some minor problems with the provision of on-campus accommodation and other student services, the program was very successful. In the period 1986 to 1992, enrolments grew steadily until they represented ten percent of the student population. The formation of a planning and management group accountable directly to senior administration ensured the maintenance of a focussed approach to marketing and the provision of services to students. The program now earns a very significant proportion of the University’s income and appears to be headed for further expansion and success.
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