

National Cultural Policy Submission

1472289

Public and anonymous

Individual



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

There needs to be an additional pillar that provides a value statement around what is 'first base' when it comes to the Arts in Australia - Arts education. This would make six pillars in total and put the focus on where it all begins - in schools.

Australia in the 90s and early 2000s had a first rate Arts education focus. In some Arts areas (such as Media Arts), it was world-leading. Now that is in tatters.

Arts education has been decimated by counteracting government policies and pushes. Students are abandoning study in the Arts as they react to these negating factors.

Queensland arts education has been particularly badly affected.

An example of this exodus can be seen in the experience of the school I taught at until recently. The school spent a lot of money on Arts education and built a massive building to support all five arts areas. The building included a film studio, sound recording studio, small cinema, large auditorium, drama spaces, art studios and music studios as well as a dedicated sprung-floor dance studio. Once, it was thriving. Now that building is only partly used and the spaces are being re-purposed as staffrooms and general purpose classrooms.

The subject I taught, Film, Television and New Media used to have eight classes of 25 students (four each in Year eleven and twelve). Now it has none in Year Eleven. This is at a school of over 2000 students. It is at a school that provided the training for lots of people who are now working in the film industry.

In that school where once there were three drama classes there are now none, three art classes have reduced to one, a music extension course is barely surviving and there is no dance class.

The main problem is the negative perception of the Arts subjects in the ATAR system, together with the government's and education department's over-focus on STEM. Statistics show that students across Queensland have deserted the arts. The fall in Queensland senior school Arts courses is up to 50 percent in some Arts subjects.

In the tertiary sector, the \$50,000 Arts degrees introduced by the Morrison government have had a similarly devastating effect.

Therefore, introducing a sixth pillar devoted to reviving the Arts education sector is fundamental to the future of the Arts in Australia.