



17 June 2008

The Editor - The Australian / The Editor – Higher Education Supplement / Mr Andrew Norton

Dear Sirs,

I write to correct assumptions made in an article published in the HES of the Australian last week (Protectionist ploy a blast from the past - 11th June 2008) written by Andrew Norton who implied that Raffles College of Design and Commerce (RCDC), as a foreign owned private higher education provider, “probably does not meet these criteria” laid out in the Higher Education Support Act 2003 of having management control in Australia. RCDC conforms both to the letter and the spirit of the law in that we are fully governed in Australia by resident Australians led by me as CEO and Chair of Council. As a “foreign owned” provider we also believe we bring a different perspective to higher education in Australia offering unique opportunities to our staff and students.

I am the CEO and Chair of the RCDC Council and I have led the organisation as Chair of Council since its acquisition from the previous owner. My previous Higher Education experiences were as Head of School at UNSW (School of Design Studies 1994 to 2000) and then Dean of Sydney College of the Arts, USYD (2002 to 2006). Prior to that, I have worked in Sydney as a professional designer and business manager. Addressing Andrew’s assumptions:

“So what does “central management and control in Australia mean”? The Education Department told me: “The following are the main factors taken into account when assessing whether the central management and control of an applicant are in Australia:”

* “Whether the persons who make significant decisions about the applicant body, such as the chief executive and other relevant persons with the power to make significant decisions, reside in Australia.”

The membership of the governing Council of RCDC, the body that has legal responsibility for making the decisions on the management of RCDC, is as follows:

Prof Ron Newman (Chair and CEO) Australian citizen - resides Sydney
Prof Tony Shannon - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Mr Isaac Ng - New Zealand Citizen - resides Sydney
Dr Michele Sanson - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Mr Rod Campbell - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Dr Mieke Leppens - Belgium Citizen - resides Sydney
Assoc Prof Bob Chung - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Prof Jesse Jin - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Mr James Barnett - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Ms Hannah Paterson - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Ms Jane Mourão - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Mr Simon Pemberton - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney

Membership of Academic Board of RCDC which is responsible for academic governance is as follows:

Prof Jesse Jin (Chair)(University of Newcastle) - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney,

Prof Tony Shannon - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Assoc Prof Bob Chung - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Assoc Prof Peter Cameron - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Dr Chun Jiang - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Prof Steve Rawlinson - New Zealand Citizen - resides Singapore
Mr Greg Pritchard - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Adjunct Prof Jenny Wilson - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney
Mr Jonathan Howe - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney

* "Where the applicant is a company, whether the majority of its directors reside in Australia."

Raffles College Pty Ltd trading as Raffles College of Design and Commerce (RCDC) is an Australian Company and is 100% owned by Raffles Education Corp of Singapore. The three directors and company secretary as follows:

Mr Isaac Ng - New Zealand Citizen - resides Sydney
Mr Chew Hua Seng - Singapore Citizen - resides Singapore
Mr Andrew Moore - Australian Citizen - resides Melbourne
Mr Dennis Lai - Australian Citizen - resides Sydney (Company Secretary)

* "Whether the body's registered office is in Australia."

Raffles College Pty Ltd's registered office is at 99 Mount Street North Sydney NSW 2060 AUSTRALIA

Raffles probably does not meet these criteria.

I believe the above information shows that we meet these criteria.

Last year Raffles had 178 students in Australia, an unknown number of whom could lose their right to borrow under FEE-HELP as a result of this amendment and have to pay up-front instead.

In 2008 we have a total of 731 students (HEP and VET), 209 on FEE-HELP and 312 in VET

From 16th to 25th July 2008, RCDC will hold its annual graduate exhibition (invitation attached). I would like to invite Andrew Norton to join us for this function, which would give us an opportunity to talk more about RCDC, the sector and allow him to see our campus and our student's work.

I hope there is an opportunity in the coming issues of the HES to correct any misunderstandings your readers may have arrived at about RCDC and about us fulfilling our statutory requirements.

Best regards



Professor Ron Newman, CEO & Chair of Council