

# General Introduction

## 2006

The University of Melbourne was established by an Act of the Victorian Parliament in 1853. The foundation stone of the first University building was laid in 1854 on the present central University site of about twenty hectares in the northern part of the City of Melbourne.

Adjacent to the central site, under separate grants and titles, are the recreation grounds of almost six and a half hectares and the lands of the affiliated residential colleges covering more than eighteen hectares. The University also has other campuses and properties in suburban Melbourne and regional Victoria.

The University consists of a Council, the Professors, other members of the academic staff, members of faculties, graduates, diplomates, undergraduates and members of the general staff designated by Council. The Council of 21 members has responsibility for the conduct of University affairs.

The graduates collectively comprise Convocation, which may make submissions on University matters to the Council. Convocation elects a Standing Committee which may make suggestions to Council.

At its inception, and for many years afterwards, the University received grants from the Victorian Government, and income from fees and benefactions. Since the Second World War the Australian Government has provided financial support. From the beginning of 1974, with the agreement of the Victorian Government, the Australian Government assumed responsibility for the governmental financial support of this and other universities and at the same time provided funds to enable tuition fees to be abolished. The Federal Government introduced, from 1<sup>st</sup> January 1989, the Higher Education Contribution Scheme, which applies to all students enrolling or re-enrolling in government funded higher education courses from that date. The Scheme consists of an annual charge which each student is liable to pay towards the cost of his or her study. This charge may be paid at enrolment or deferred and paid through the taxation system. However, full fees are payable by international students and by students of graduate and postgraduate coursework programs. From 1999 a limited number of places in undergraduate courses have been made available on a full-fee basis to Australian students unable to secure a government-funded place. All students must also pay the University's Amenities and Services Fee.

In size, the University grew slowly during its first 90 years from the original sixteen students in 1855 to 4,000 in 1945. This growth was accelerated after the Second World War when the University faced increasing demands on its facilities, first by large numbers of ex-servicemen and women in the immediate postwar years and then by the increasing numbers of students completing secondary school courses.

In the last decade of the 20th century the structure of the University underwent profound change. An amalgamation between the University and the adjacent Melbourne College of Advanced Education came into effect in 1989. This resulted in a merger between the College and the University's Faculty of Education. The Hawthorn Institute of Education, affiliated with the University in 1991, is now fully amalgamated and integrated with the Faculty of Education.

Also in 1991, the Victorian College of the Arts affiliated with the University and its higher education programs are now offered through the School of the Victorian College of the Arts. The College remains largely an autonomous institution with its own Act of Parliament, Council and Director (Chief Executive). Its students enrol in courses approved by the University's Academic Board and receive degrees of the University.

The Victorian College of Agriculture and Horticulture affiliated with the University in 1992, and became a part of the new Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Horticulture in 1995. The faculty was reconstituted as the Institute of Land and Food Resources in July 1997.

In 1998 the University established a private arm, Melbourne University Private Ltd, which offered its first courses in 1999. During 2001 the first stage of a merger between Melbourne University Private Ltd and Melbourne Enterprises International Ltd, the University's commercial arm, was effected. Melbourne Enterprises International Limited became a subsidiary of Melbourne University Private Ltd. As from July 2003 Melbourne University Private Ltd became a self-accrediting institution but the University's Academic

Board will review courses accredited by Melbourne University Private Ltd on a periodic basis to ensure that they are of quality comparable to award courses at the same level as the University of Melbourne.

The academic reputation of the University of Melbourne has long been recognised throughout the world, its graduates and former students have achieved distinction in many fields including the offices of Governor-General, State Governor and Prime Minister. Many graduates have gained fame in the arts and sciences and the professions and politics, including the awards of the Nobel Prize and admission to the Order of Merit. Since the first conferring ceremony in 1856, the University has awarded more than 288,847 degrees and diplomas.

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