

From: [Richard Hockey](#)
To: [Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee](#)
Subject: Smoking and tobacco use at universities, technical and further education facilities, and registered training organisations.
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Mr Scott Stewart MP
Chair
Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Submission to the inquiry into Smoking and tobacco use at universities, technical and further education facilities, and registered training organisations.

Dear Mr Stewart

Thank you for providing an opportunity for me to make a submission to this important inquiry.

Background

I am a public health researcher at the University of Queensland with over 30 years of experience with a strong interest in tobacco control, particularly with regard to public policy. At my university there has been a number of failed attempts to implement smoking bans the last being in 2012. Given the university's reluctance in this area I feel compelled to provide my own input in the hope that the parliament will take action. Currently UQ is the only Brisbane university without a proposed or existing total or partial smoking ban and the only Group of Eight university.

From a public health perspective smoking bans are a 'no brainer'. The health effects of smoking are well known and benefits of never smoking or quitting do not need restating. Smoking rates particularly amongst young people are now at an all time low at around 10%, but this figure needs to be lower. Any measure that can facilitate this is to be commended.

There is reasonable evidence workplace smoking bans do reduce smoking rates including bans in universities. A 2012 study found that "a campus-wide tobacco ban is a well-accepted and effective prevention method for smoking" while another found it an "effective intervention for reducing tobacco use among college students" (see links below). Similar results have been noted following bans in other institutions such as hospitals.

Allowing smoking to continue in Queensland's universities is inconsistent with existing legislation which prohibits smoking in other education places and public institutions such as hospitals and prisons.

An objection put forward against such a measure is that it would be hard to enforce particularly on an extensive campus. I would counter this with the experience of other universities such as UWA which are similar in nature and have had total bans for several years without any problems. Social norms surrounding smoking have now shifted to such a degree that smokers now accept restrictions without question. Smoking bans now effectively enforce themselves.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission which I hope you will take into consideration when deciding the outcome of your inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Richard Hockey

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21851836>

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23002798>

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