

Guide rates the 'best buys' among Australian campuses for aspiring tertiary students Canberra's universities miss out — again

By DAVID SIBLEY

Canberra's four universities are not in the top 15 "best buys" in Australian tertiary education — for the second year running.

The Independent Monthly Good Universities Guide to Australian Universities, launched yesterday by Carolyn Hewson, wife of the Leader of the Opposition, John Hewson, has given the Australian National University, University of Canberra, the Australian Defence Force Academy, and the Signadou campus of the Australian Catholic University, the same assessments as last year.

The guide, written by education consultants Dean Ashenden and Sandra Milligan, continues its 1991 description of the ANU as "not always" providing stimulating teaching by academic staff, asks the same question about whether the University of Canberra's "administrative push for quality teaching can outweigh the effects of budget and staff cuts", repeats that "little information is publicly available about ADFA's progress", and reiterates that it was "too soon" to pass comment on how the campuses of the Australian Catholic University had integrated.

All of Australia's 48 universities and their 140 campuses are compared through 14 criteria, an increase of four from the first edition, such as staff-student ratios, cost of living, library quality, research record, male-female ratio, graduate starting salaries, and graduate unemployment rates.

This year's edition, for 1993 uni-

versity aspirants, has a new section on women in universities, giving a "women-friendliness" rating by comparing services such as child-care and women's studies.

So how did Canberra's universities fare?

"Depth of study opportunities" indicated the range of study levels from higher-research degrees to non-award. Out of a possible five star rating, the University of Canberra achieved the maximum, with the others receiving four.

This was the same as last year's guide where UC had the top ACT ranking for offering a full range of course levels, the ANU and ADFA each had a moderate range, and ACU a limited range.

The "exclusivity" rating compared each university to see how selective their tertiary entrances scores were. ADFA received five stars meaning that entrance scores were fairly high across its courses, while UC received one star indicating that the average entrance scores of its entrants were "generally rather lower than the national average". The ANU and ACU did not receive a rating.

"Opportunities for those without Year 12 scores" looked at the flexibility of admissions based on either previous TAFE study, leaving school, special entry for people educationally disadvantaged or with relevant work experience, an entrance exam, or mature age. The Canberra Institute of the Arts, although part of the ANU was given separate ratings, received five stars; the ACU, three; the rest of the ANU and UC, two; and ADFA, one.

ANU is on the attack, UC is quite relaxed

By DAVID SIBLEY

While the Australian National University attacked the Good Universities Guide, saying that it conveyed "incomplete descriptions", the University of Canberra was "pretty relaxed about it".

The Australian Defence Force Academy also criticised the guide for ignoring its research performance, saying that its specialist nature had been overlooked, leaving its assessment "to be expected".

The Vice-Chancellor of the ANU, Professor Laurie Nichol, said that "a four-star rating in several categories of the ... guide reflects only partly the strength of the ANU."

"Such surveys inevitably convey incomplete descriptions of any university."

"The research profile of ANU, for example, cannot be judged solely

on success in gaining Commonwealth competitive grants because this ignores the Institute of Advanced Studies which is ineligible in this type of competition."

The prestige of the ANU in the international research community reflected directly on the esteem in which its degrees were held and prospective students were encouraged to consider "such important qualities not covered by the survey".

"It is also understandable that the survey cannot be up-to-date," he said.

"The current construction of a new lecture theatre complex, the refurbishment of Fenner Hall as a major extension to student accommodation, and recent moves to highlight good teaching practice are all examples of recent developments in

ANU which could not be captured in this guide."

However, a spokeswoman for the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Canberra, Professor Don Aitkin, said that "we're where we ought to be in the ratings in 1992."

"With the kind of initiatives and plans we have, we are aiming to move up through the rankings in the next few years."

"It is basically watch this space."

She did not have any problems with the guide questioning whether the university's push for quality teaching could be outweighed by budget and staff cuts, saying that Professor Aitkin had brought "a breath of fresh air" to UC.

"It is only its second edition, it can only get better," she said.

"It is useful, [and while] it is not

the only thing that students look at, it is a good thing."

The rector of ADFA's University College, Professor Harry Heseltine, said that because the guide had missed the fact that they were a specialist body, its assessment was to be expected.

He was disappointed about the comments on ADFA's research performance which might have been absorbed in the University of NSW's rating.

"We are very proud of our research performance and believe it is better than most," he said. "... I don't recall anybody from The Good Universities Guide coming to talk to us, they must have relied on printed statistical material."

No one was available for comment from the Signadou campus of the Australian Catholic University.

performance of graduates across the board and in each field. UC did well, receiving five stars because graduates in eight of 16 degrees were receiving better-than-average salaries; ACU, five; the ANU, four; while ADFA was not mentioned. This was better than last year, when the ANU and UC received three.

Graduates from ACT institutions seem to be finding employment according to the "how hard is it to get

jobs" rating, which gave five stars to universities with a smaller proportion of graduates still looking for work. All of the Canberra universities received the maximum rating.

"Research performance", based on the value of grants made by the Australian Research Council and the National Health and Medical Research Council, the ANU came eighth nationally, UC was 26th, ACU was 33rd, with ADFA not men-

tioned. Last year's ratings were only based on ARC grants, with the ANU in 10th position, and UC 28th. The guide did not repeat its research student enrolment listing which the ANU topped.

The "what are the staff like" category looked at the mix of ages, sexes, and proportions of senior, tenured and part-time staff. The ANU's 2506 staff had junior seniority, average tenure, average age with 15 per cent of staff over 55, 84.85 per cent were full-time, and the gender balance was male; UC's 368 staff had average seniority, average tenure, older ages with 12 per cent over 55, 79.48 were full-time, and the gender balance was even; and ADFA's 193 staff had senior seniority, high tenure, average ages with 12 per cent over 55, 94.3 per cent were full-time, and the gender balance was very male.

The "what are the students like" rating gave a thumb-nail picture of each student body which had remained much the same as last year. All but ADFA, which was very male, had even gender balances; part-time students were moderate at the ANU and UC, and small at ADFA and CITA; no ACT institution had external students; and only ADFA and the ANU had strong numbers of students taking higher degrees.

In the new category of "woman-friendliness", five stars meant the university was more balanced than

most. CITA gained the maximum; UC followed with four; the ANU, three; and ADFA, one.

"Libraries" were rated from very good, five stars, to rudimentary or very specialised, one star. The ANU received five, ADFA, three; UC, three; and CITA, one.

The final rating, "making ends meet", looked at the cost of living, with the cheapest universities gaining five stars. The ANU received four stars and UC, three.

Victorian institutions dominated the top 10 "best buy" universities, with Deakin University, University of Melbourne, Monash University, Murdoch University, Swinburne Institute of Technology and the Victoria University of Technology. The other "best buys" were the Queensland University of Technology, University of Queensland, University of Technology, Sydney, and Wollongong University.

Two NSW institutions, Macquarie University and University of Technology, Sydney, were considered the most "woman-friendly" campuses. The best buys in regional universities were Charles Sturt University, NSW; James Cook University, QLD; and the University of Tasmania.

Of last year's "best buys", Bond University has been dropped because of continuing conflict over its ownership and financial viability, giving rise to the question of whether Bond degrees will be recognised in the future.

\$5m needed to balance the books of learning

By IAN WARDEN

The irony is not lost on Don Anderson, announced this week by the Minister for Higher Education and Employment Services, Peter Baldwin, as the man to chair, part time, a new Committee for the Advancement of University Teaching, that he, Dr Anderson, works from an office in the ANU's Research School of Social Sciences. No one in the research school is required to teach and only ever does so by invitation, and the school's labyrinthine corridors (in the H. C. Coombs building) are seldom contaminated by the presence of any of the ANU's 7500 undergraduates.

Dr Anderson is the man minister Baldwin has chosen to spend \$5 million a year for several years, beginning in 1993, to redress a perceived imbalance (perceived by Mr Baldwin's Government and, among other academics, by Dr Anderson) which has seen, in the past 30 years, universities lean away from teaching and towards research. It has got to the point where, Dr Anderson said yesterday, "academics who would prefer to make teaching the main thrust of their careers are a bit demoralised and feel that the game is stacked against them".

Mr Baldwin's Government, and Dr Anderson, think that universities should do ample teaching and should improve the quality of what teaching they do because, as Dr Anderson put it, "the patrons of universities these days of course are the public through their taxes and most of the public support they are willing to give universities is because of their [the universities'] teaching. Universities are places that educate them or their kids for entry to the professions".

Research academics can earn promotion and kudos by writing monographs and publishing articles in cerebral journals while academics who teach find it hard to amass palpable evidence of their fair and industry. On behalf of the latter Dr Anderson and his committee (there are four other members at the moment with more appointments in the offing) will oversee the spending of the \$5 million a year in 1993 and similar amounts in subsequent years.

In 1993 \$4 million will be spent on National Teaching Development Grants of up to \$100,000 over two years given, after competition, to individual academics or groups of academics with proposed projects designed to promote "good practice and innovation in education".

Up to \$500,000 will be spent by the minister in 1993 on "innovative development projects" commissioned by the committee.

The committee will insist that the projects recommended to the minister as being worthy of funding will be ideas of use to all university teachers in all universities. The ready dissemination of the findings and the bright ideas of the projects will be a priority of the committee.

What all this expenditure and all this awarding of grants and commissioning of projects means, one discovers from Dr Anderson, is that money is going to be spent on projects which show how modern technologies can be used in university teaching and in teaching university teachers to wield these modern tools effectively.

Advertisements inviting applications for funding for projects should, Dr Anderson says, begin to appear soon because the minister is anxious to announce some of them this year.

Dr Anderson expects the proposed projects to be verminous with ideas

It may be time to dispense with lectures

for the use of modern teaching aids. The days of the lecturer who anaesthetises a vast congregation of undergraduates in a lecture theatre may be numbered. University teaching is, Dr Anderson laments, still "dominated" by the lecture, the lecture theatre and the timetable with their odd and anachronistic survival in these technologically sophisticated times owing something, he feels, to the "psychological needs" of lecturers, giving them "prominence" and "a position of power without being threatened". Students may also, he thinks, have their own psychological reasons for liking formal lectures, but it may be time to dispense with lectures because they offer "no interaction of minds".

In his philosophy he dreams of there being a declining emphasis on the formal lecture (it pains him that, just across the campus, the ANU is building still more of these accursed lecture theatres) with students getting their information instead from actual books (he is amused that, "some years after the invention of

the printing press" students should have to go to lectures rather than go to books) from radios, televisions and computers, using CD ROMS (compact disc read-only memories) which can store banks of information which students can have ready access to with the pressing of buttons.

All of this, he believes, will free university teachers from the tyranny of lectures and give them time, instead, for individual or small group interactions.

"My own view" he said yesterday, enthused by the very thought of CD ROMS, "is that university and teaching is essentially a social activity, an exchange of ideas, and that if we can use a good many of the modern aids now available to get across the basic, the routine material that students have to have before they can be moved into the more critical parts of learning then it will free staff to interact with students."

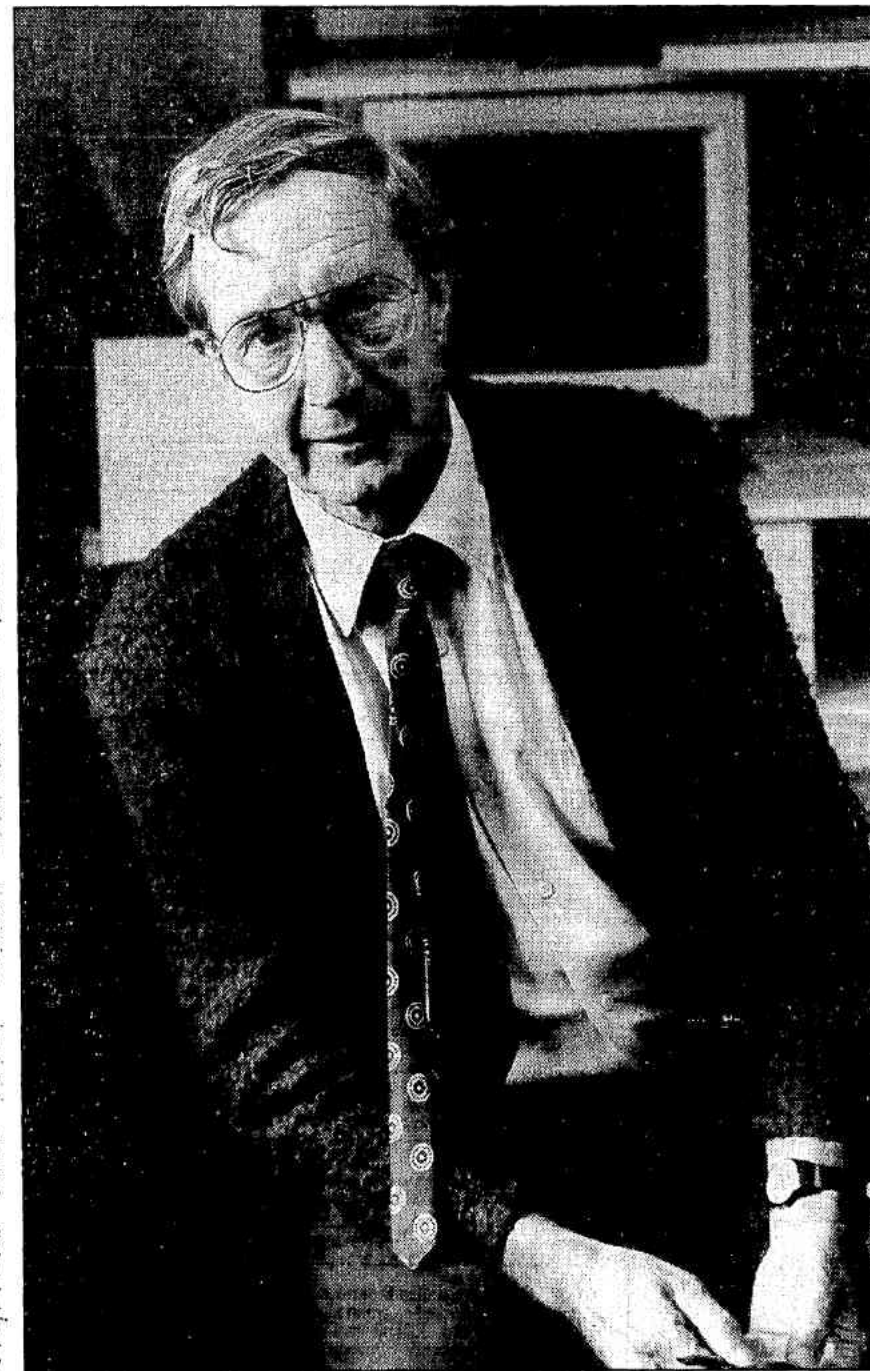
He agrees that not all academics want to interact with students and that some will be appalled by the very idea and that some universities and their staff will find it "a big effort" to adapt. The committee is about, he says, "changing the culture" of universities and he knows that "cultural change in any institution, a hospital, a school, a university or a factory is pretty difficult".

In any case, he mused, the redressing of the aforementioned imbalance (in favour of research at the expense of teaching) is a process which is underway anyway and will happen in spite of the committee rather than because of it.

"There are early signs of it in Australia and there are early signs of it in North America and if we [the committee] do our job properly we'll just nudge things along in the right direction."

Dr Anderson has had more than 30 years' experience in Australian universities and was chairman of the ACT Schools Authority from 1985 to 1988.

The four other members of the committee so far named are: Ms Dagmar Schmidtmaier, general manager, open training and education network, NSW TAFE Commission; Professor Faith Trent, Dean of Academic and Student Affairs, Flinders University; Professor Roy Webb, Vice-Chancellor of Griffith University and Mr Tony White, president of the National Union of Students.



Dr Don Anderson: academics who would prefer to make teaching the main thrust of their careers are a bit demoralised and feel that the game is stacked against them.

War-time beating killed baby: witness

ADELAIDE: The European war crimes hearing was told yesterday that a man believed to be Adelaide pensioner Mikolaj Berzowsky allegedly beat a baby to death in its mother's arms.

A witness, Vanda Lepshyeyeva, 68, told the Adelaide Magistrates Court the incident happened in 1942 when a column of Jews was being marched from a village in German-occupied Ukraine.

Mrs Lepshyeyeva said she saw a woman known as Liza Granovskaya at the rear of the column pleading with a Ukrainian policeman who looked and sounded like Berzowsky. She said Mrs Granovskaya was saying she and the child in her arms should be released as she was married to a Ukrainian.

The policeman Mrs Lepshyeyeva thought was Berzowsky swung a stick or whip to hit Mrs Granovskaya, but it glanced off her and struck the baby.

Mrs Lepshyeyeva said the baby — between 12 months and 18 months old and of unknown sex — "showed no signs of life" after being hit.

Speaking through an interpreter, Mrs Lepshyeyeva — a Gniwan resi-

dent who was deported to a German labour camp in July, 1942 — told the court the woman said, "What has thou done to me, you have killed my child."

Berzowsky, a 78-year-old Adelaide pensioner, is charged with being party to the murder of 102 Jews in the Ukrainian village Gniwan between March 1 and July 31, 1942.

The woman and baby were part of a column of about 100 to 150 Jews — mostly elderly people, women and children — herded out of Gniwan and then shot and buried in the woods, Mrs Lepshyeyeva said.

Though Mrs Lepshyeyeva identified Berzowsky yesterday in court, she was unable to recognise him last year from among photographs taken of 12 men in about 1950.

Senior defence lawyer Michael David, QC, said yesterday there were also discrepancies in Mrs Lepshyeyeva's evidence yesterday from what she told a Soviet investigating magistrate, Victor Podvutskiy, in a signed statement made in 1987.

Mr David said in that statement she did not identify the policeman who she now said was Berzowsky.

The hearing resumes today.

Jail for heroin courier

A man was sentenced to 3½ years' jail for possession of heroin yesterday, but Justice Kenneth Jenkinson set a relatively short non-parole period of nine months to minimise the "corrupting and demoralising effect" of prison.

Talal Awad, 24, of Sydney, had pleaded guilty in the ACT Supreme Court to possessing a trafficable amount of heroin.

He was arrested on November 10, 1989, after driving from Sydney to the ACT to deliver heroin.

The Supreme Court had heard evidence that Awad had discussed the delivery over the phone with the woman who lived in the house where Awad was arrested.

The package seized by police contained 14.71g of a white substance, 2.17g of which was found to be heroin. The trafficable amount is considered to be 2g.

Justice Jenkinson said that due to the seriousness with which the courts viewed the offence, a jail sentence was appropriate.

However, when sentencing, he said several factors had to be taken into account, including the small amount of heroin involved.

He also said there was no evidence that Awad had been any more than a drug courier, for a fee, and said he did not seem to have been part of the organisation of the distribution network.

Awad had become involved because the people who organised the deal were "fearful street identities" where Awad lived, and he had cultivated their acquaintance for protection.

Justice Jenkinson said that Awad was an "intelligent young man", who "should withdraw from criminal associations".

Beneath Awad's "protective veneer of glib cockiness" was a "timidity" that may be harmed and exploited in jail.

The short non-parole period was set to lessen the likelihood of this happening and to give the prisoner a chance to make something of his life.

Awad, who arrived from Lebanon with his family in 1984, had no prior drug convictions, and had been a diligent student and worker. His problems with his family had been caused by difficulty in cultural adaptation to a new country.

Young gun Humphries: a high-flier in the thick of things



The saying "speak softly and carry a big stick" might well apply to Gary John Joseph Humphries.

At 33, he is the youngest MLA yet one of the Assembly's most experienced members.

Mr Humphries went into the first Legislative Assembly as the Liberal Party's deputy leader and shadow attorney-general, positions he still holds.

However, there have been some remarkable changes in the structure of the Assembly in little more than three years and it would be fair to say that Mr Humphries has been in the thick of the planning, scheming, dreaming and plotting.

His party supporters see him as the next party leader and so do many others.

When the first Assembly's affairs were making headlines — governments falling and being created and public debate running hot on education and hospitals — Mr Humphries was involved in the action.

Looking back, he heaves a sigh of relief at the cauterising of the first term of self-government and the entrenched cynicism it provoked.

He said this week that he stood by the tough decisions he had taken as the Minister for Health, Education and the Arts in the former Alliance Government.

It was his pen that signed the closure of the Royal Canberra Hospital and a number of schools.

He saw the moves as desperately needed economic reforms to keep Canberra's finances out of the red.

Being in the midst of such decision-making was the last thing on his mind when he left the Australian National University in 1983.

He had not even planned to stay in Canberra but planned to study law and work as a solicitor in Sydney.

But politics, and university politics in particular, came easily to him.

He was president of the univer-

Peter Clack continues his profiles on ACT MLAs, this week talking to one of the Assembly's youngest yet most experienced members, a Liberal Party man to the core and an eloquent and incisive debater

sity's Liberal Club and the students' association, the first non-left student to hold the position for 20 years.

By the time he left university he was deeply involved in Canberra politics and a rapid rise in the Liberal Party soon followed.

He was elected president at his first branch meeting and was then asked to stand against the Member for Canberra, Ros Kelly.

By 1985 he was divisional vice-president; two years later the president.

He went to work as an adviser to Senator Amanda Vanstone and found himself in the right place at the right time.

The Minister for Territories, Gary Punch, was formulating plans for ACT self-government, and Senator

Vanstone, as the Opposition spokeswoman on territories, asked Mr Humphries to work on responses.

He was able to familiarise himself with the issues and, as divisional party president, he was well placed to put his name in the hat for preselection.

He came top of the ticket and was narrowly beaten by Trevor Kaine in a leadership vote.

From the day the Assembly first sat, Mr Humphries was involved in schemes to take government.

A last-ditch attempt to scrape together an alliance including Abolish Self Government MLA Dennis Stevenson failed the day before the first Assembly was sworn in.

So, despite the efforts by the Liberals and the Residents Rally, Rose-

mary Follett became the ACT's first Chief Minister and Mr Kaine became Opposition Leader.

Seven months later the climate changed drastically.

A no-confidence motion was moved over the Labor Party's alleged failure to declare a donation (the ALP was later exonerated).

That same morning the Residents Rally leader, Bernard Collaery, burst into Mr Humphries office and said that something had to be done.

Mr Collaery then moved a motion of no-confidence in Ms Follett.

Meanwhile, Mr Collaery stitched up a deal with the No Self Government MLAs, Craig Duby, David Prowse and Carmel Maher, and the next week the Alliance became the ACT's first majority government.

Mr Humphries said his game plan was to provide leadership in key areas of major micro-economic reform, and to push it as quickly as possible.

After a cavalcade of meetings and publicity, the Royal Canberra Hospital's fate was sealed and five schools were earmarked for closure.

By then the days of the Alliance Government were numbered and Mr Collaery was sacked by Mr Kaine. The same day, Ms Follett moved a motion of no-confidence in the Government and the Rally supported her.

In the ensuing Liberal party room meeting, Mr Kaine resigned as leader and Mr Humphries assumed the mantle.

But his tenure was short-lived. Block voting at the Liberal's preselection night relegated Mr Humphries to No 5 on the ticket and an outside chance that he might lose his seat.

Now he is back in his former job, but the issues facing Canberra have not changed a lot.

The biggest question is how the territory will pay its way.

Mr Humphries says the community should be independent enough to set its own goals rather than rely on decisions being based on federal funding.

The remedy was some dramatic stimulus to the private sector and a rethink in the way the Government provided services.

"Canberra is still wrapped in cotton wool," Mr Humphries said. "We must get rid of that before we can control our own destiny."

Mr Humphries makes no apologies for decisions taken in Government. He said politicians were elected to lead and to inspire by example.

"A politician who only listens would shy away from any difficult decisions," he said.