

**Warning**

1961

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This information was published in 1966 in *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* and has not been corrected and will not be updated.

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## EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY - UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

### The Parry Report

The committee comprised Sir David Hughes Parry, Emeritus Professor of English Law, University of London, as chairman; Dean Geoffrey C. Andrew, University of British Columbia; and Dr R. W. Harman, a distinguished man of science and business. Their order of reference was comprehensive. Among particular matters they were asked to report on the number of young people for whom university education should be provided and on the standard of attainment at entry — this last an important point because successive governments, interpreting the views of society at large, had accepted the “equal opportunity for all” slogan, with the subsequent rejection of the notion of raising the standard of the Entrance Examination to select only candidates of proved high ability. The committee did not recommend stricter requirements for entry, preferring to urge means of improving performance of entrants, such as the granting of more worthwhile bursaries to aid more students to study full time. They criticised severely the disproportionate number of part-time students, as well as the system of extramural study, insisting that the remedy in both cases lay in better appreciation on the part of students, parents, employers, and the Government of the value of fulltime study.

They found university staffing inadequate, ratios of less than one staff member to 50 students in a department being common (though finance for staffing was based on a 1 to 14 ratio overall). They supported the recommendations of the University Grants Committee (1 to 10 for first thousand and 1 to 14 beyond that), and also, except in minor details, the salary scale that had already been urged on the Government (ranging from £900 for assistant lecturer to £3,300 for professors). As regards buildings, they accepted in general the plan put forward by the University Grants Committee for the next 10 years, but urged accelerated progress; and they were emphatic about the need for developing a forward policy concerning halls of residence. They found libraries everywhere inadequate both as to stocks and accommodation, and recommended immediate special grants of £10,000 to each university and £5,000 to each agricultural college. As to research they recommended an immediate increase in the grant to £65,000, and to 100,000 in 1961, rising in the next few years to £150,000; and that a National Scientific Research Council be set up to coordinate the scientific research services of the State.

The most fundamental recommendations, however, were those relating to the structure of the University of New Zealand itself, namely: That the constituent universities be given complete autonomy, subject only to a new University Grants Committee, and certain subcommittees thereof; and that the University of New Zealand be dissolved as soon as possible. That a University Grants Committee be established by Act of Parliament, with powers generally equal to those of the existing Committee together with the right to initiate, in consultation with the universities, plans for balanced development to meet fully the national needs. That the committee be appointed by the Government, and that it comprise a chairman, and seven members selected from a list submitted by the universities, four not being associated with any university and three being professors or teachers. That a Universities Entrance Board be set up as a subcommittee of the Grants Committee. That a Curriculum Committee be set up as a subcommittee of the Grants Committee with the duty, among others, of advising on any proposal by any university to establish a new faculty or a new department of study, and of considering any difficulties about equivalence of courses and of transfer of students.

On the question of finance, while generally approving the block grants proposed for the 1960–64 quinquennium by the existing Grants Committee, the committee recommended that in future block grants for universities and general be based, as for those for special schools, on actual needs.

On receiving the Parry Report, the Government acted promptly. The recommendations regarding salaries, libraries; research, and finance generally were adopted subject only to further negotiation of some details. In 1960 an Act was passed instituting the new University Grants Committee which took office at the beginning of 1961; and in the course of that year a complete programme of legislation was prepared and passed dealing with reconstruction. A Universities Act provided for the dissolution of the University of New Zealand and the transfer of some of its functions, including the power to confer degrees, to the individual universities. Most of its remaining functions and its property were vested in the University Grants Committee, the 1960 Act being repealed and a new Act (1961) being passed to this end. Separate Acts gave new powers to the individual universities, while the Lincoln College Act and the Massey College Act established new relationships between Lincoln College and the University of Canterbury in the one case, and between Massey College and the Victoria University of Wellington on the other. And so the long and often troubled but honourable history of the University of New Zealand came quietly to an end.

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