

grants "topping-up" the tertiary allowances, but with only a very limited number available.

This option completely fails to meet the access criterion. Even more than the previous alternative, it would arouse strong opposition from those student teachers who are committed to teaching, and who would lose a valuable allowance. The proposal meets the equity criterion, and saves costs. However, its effectiveness as a program of recruiting teachers is uncertain: the allowances may well be insufficient for this purpose.

### Conclusion

The demise of bonding is well and truly here. The operative question is what shall replace the existing schemes of studentships when the bond goes. The author's preference is for a system of unbonded studentships restricted to areas of teacher shortage, combined with unbonded bursaries for all suitable teacher trainees. This combination seems the one most likely to meet the two major criteria, those of cost-effectiveness and access. At the same time, the tertiary allowances need to be at least restored to their earlier value in real terms, in order to ensure that some students are not denied a tertiary education. If this does not occur, many of the alternatives to bonding become much less desirable.

Hopefully, we may see such changes, and with them a new emphasis on attracting rather than capturing the teachers of our children.

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## SURVEY OF STUDENT HOUSING\*

A. P. T. Loftus\*\*

### Introduction

A survey was sent to all students at the University of Newcastle, requesting information about housing facilities, services, restrictions, finances and travel arrangements, reasons for suitability or otherwise of accommodation and the students' concept of ideal housing. Student opinion appeared to be swinging away from housing in the traditional college or hall to various alternative styles. This survey therefore, hoped to:

- (a) investigate the advantages and disadvantages of current styles of living;
- (b) determine the attitudes of students toward alternative styles of living;
- (c) assess a variety of related factors affecting housing such as financial status, distance, mode of travel.

3,753 questionnaires were posted to all non-degree, undergraduate and post-graduate students currently enrolled in July, 1973. A pre-paid envelope was enclosed to facilitate replies. Usable questionnaires returned represented 65.9% of the possible number of respondents.

Table 1 compares the characteristics of the students responding with university statistics of enrolment, and shows that the sample closely parallels the university population, except that full-time students are slightly over-represented.

Twenty-four per cent of the sample were married, 74% had their homes within 24 miles of Newcastle, 4% were from Sydney, 15% from elsewhere in New South Wales, 1% from other states and 7% from overseas.

TABLE 1. University Enrolments April, 1973 and Survey Sample

	Enrolments		Survey	
	N	%	N	%
Undergraduate & Non-degree	3,327	86%	2,031	84%
Post-Graduate Diploma	248	6%	168	7%
Higher Degree	296	8%	171	7%
Male	2,723	70%	1,632	68%
Female	1,148	30%	759	32%
Overseas Students	265	7%	158	7%
Full-Time	2,130	55%	1,409	59%
Part-Time	1,741	45%	1,000	41%
<b>Faculty*</b>				
Applied Science	112	3%	75	3%
Architecture	129	4%	83	3%
Arts	1,284	36%	961	37%
Economics & Commerce	688	19%	432	18%
Engineering	689	19%	459	19%
Mathematics	202	6%	147	6%
Science	447	13%	293	12%
Total	3,551	100%	2,409	100%

\*Excludes higher degrees

\*My thanks are due to Mrs. G. McKerihan, Research Assistant to the University Counselling Service, who prepared this summary of the report entitled Survey of Student Housing for the University of

Newcastle, New South Wales by A. P. T. Loftus, University Counselling Service, 1974.

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## Accommodation Analysis

TABLE 2.

Type of Accommodation	
Home with parents	46%
Home with spouse	22%
Edwards Hall	4%
Hostels	2%
Boarding in private house	8%
Share flat or house	13%
Living alone	3%
Other form of accommodation (e.g. Convent)	2%

Table 2 shows that two-thirds of the students lived in their parents' home or with their spouse. The next largest group shared a house or flat with others (not necessarily other students) and 8% boarded. 71% had had the experience of living at home, 29% had had some experience sharing a flat or house, and 22% had experienced board since being a student. 15% of the sample changed their accommodation during the year, but of all those not living with parents 24% changed, some more than twice. So one in four of those living away from home changed accommodation.

Any student housing scheme must take into account the proportion of students who leave for short periods such as week-ends and longer periods in vacations. Eight per cent of those not living at home usually went home for week-ends; of those boarding, 37% went home, from Edwards Hall, 18% Sharing, 17% and Living Alone 15%. Thirty-one per cent of those not living at home went home in 1st term vacation for more than two weeks; 28% in 2nd term vacation and 56% in 3rd term vacation. Some students, therefore, require permanent accommodation, but the number of discontinued occupancies must also be considered.

Thirty-six per cent shared a bedroom, but excluding married students the number dropped to 21%. Of those sharing a flat/house and those living with parents 25% shared a bedroom. However, the proportion willing to share if given the option dropped in all categories. Presumably sharing a bedroom has only economic advantages.

Overall, the figures suggested that sharing a bathroom is the rule rather than the exception. Twenty-five per cent shared their study room with one or more people. Fifty-six per cent of the students did more than half of their study in their bedrooms. Those boarding or sharing a flat/house spent more time studying in other places or perhaps studying less overall. Only 15% had a study to work in (41% of the married students) 9% use the dining room, 7% the lounge, 5% work in the kitchen, 4% in a bed-sitting room and 2% in an enclosed verandah. Ninety-four per cent had a desk or table for their studying; 70% had a desk lamp, with 37% of the

group Sharing saying they had none. Although 87% said they had adequate heating in their accommodation, 50% of those living in Hostels said they had not. Overall, the Board group used their bedroom for study more than any other group, though the amount of study done in their accommodation was below the group average. They also reported inadequate desk size and lack of room for books.

Sixty-seven per cent of the sample had evening meals provided (which included 93% of the large group of students Living with their Parents) and 60% all week-end meals (81% — Living with Parents) 85% of those Sharing and 74% Living Alone cooked their own evening meals, and 84% of each of these groups cooked their week-end meals. Five per cent ate out during the week, and 2% at week-ends.

### Suitability of Accommodation

Overall 92% considered their accommodation to be more suitable than not and only 2% regarded it as very unsuitable. Those living alone, with parent or with spouse perceived their situation as more favourable than average, while the Edwards Hall and Hostel groups were well below average in perceived suitability. Thirty-four per cent said they would move "if they could", the Hostel group feeling strongest about this.

Suitability of accommodation in students' eyes may also be inferred by surveying the restrictions imposed by those controlling it. Thirteen per cent of the students had restrictions on their time of return at night; the largest group being those Living with Parents (20%) and many more females (21%) than males (9%). Hostel life was the most restricting of social activities (visitors of the opposite sex, 84%, visitors, 45%, noise, 76%). Twenty-seven per cent of the students overall had restrictions on noise, 14% on meals at specific times (94% in Edwards Hall).

### Transport and Finance

Median time of travel was 17 minutes. Seventy-three per cent of students lived within a half hour travel of the University and only 2% took more than an hour. Car drivers included 70% of students; passengers 9%; public transport 8%; walking 6%; motor-bike or scooter riders 6% and push bikes 1%.

Cost of transport weekly\*: 45% less than \$1.99; 77% less than \$3.98; 91% less than \$5.99; 9% \$6.00 or more.

Forty-five per cent of those living with parents and 32% of those living with spouse paid no board. Otherwise median weekly charges ranged from \$7.61 to \$24.72. Extras included charges for heating, lighting, power, use of iron, hot water and laundry.

\*All costs are as in July, 1973 and have risen steeply since.

Over and above board charges a weekly expenditure on food was reported which ranged from \$2.54 to \$9.36.

Students' annual incomes were recorded from below \$1,000 to \$4,500 or more. The Living with Spouse and Living Alone groups, each of which had a high percentage of part-time students in jobs had the highest median income. The median full-time student income was \$1,367, with 61% below \$1,500 and only 3% above \$4,500. By contrast the median income for part-time students was \$4,273 and only 10% had incomes below \$1,500. Thirty-three per cent of those Living with Parents had incomes less than \$1,000, but of more concern were 4.6% of students living away from home in this predicament.

Thirty-three per cent of the sample had a scholarship with full living allowance, 11% a reduced living allowance. Thirty-three per cent came to University without scholarship help. The group with the highest percentage of students on full living allowance lived at Edwards Hall (58%). These were mostly financially assisted overseas students.

### High Rise Accommodation

A high rise building to house students has not been used in Australia, but it was thought worthwhile to test student feeling for such an enterprise. Twenty-eight per cent of the students stated that they would not live in such a building (including almost half (48%) of the married students. Of those who would live in such a building, 28% specified a particular floor beyond which they would not agree to live, and 72% checked "any floor".

### Advantages/Disadvantages of Present Accommodation

Students living with parents were in many cases prevented from leaving by lack of finance, but have the advantages of cheap accommodation, good meals and good studying facilities. Household

commitments, feelings of dependence and distance from the University are factors reducing the desire to live at home. The group of students living with their spouses contain a relatively high proportion of part-timers and post-graduates, who are older and more satisfied with their living arrangement; but if flat accommodation were made available by the University a proportion of this group would undoubtedly use it.

Edwards Hall is convenient to the campus, and congenial for students away from home, but was seen as expensive and noisy. Many saw it as suitable in the 1st year of university life as a stepping stone to a more independent form of living. Hostels were seen as the least ideal of all modes of living: they meet needs for independence and provide good studying conditions but noise and expense are problems.

Board in a single room is cheap and convenient (largely concentrated in areas around the University) but as an ideal it is replaced by sharing a flat in later years. From this survey, the unsatisfactory nature of the concept of "student accommodation" became clear. What seems to be required are "student accommodations" to meet as far as possible the needs in different age groups of students since it can be seen that needs change with the status of the student. In first year, many feel the necessity for a sheltered and controlling environment, epitomised by the parental home. As the period in the University continues, the need for a higher degree of autonomy emerges, until after four years most see themselves as self-directing adults. To help with accommodation the University's task is clear. It should provide a variety of living environments (as it provides different learning environments) where the student can match his intellectual growth gained in seminar or class room with the social and personal growth gained through a variety of accommodation experiences designed to meet his changing life pattern.