

# THE BATTLER



If we wanted our judgement doubled by peasants, we would teach you to think for yourselves. Get back to work before we release the hounds

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ISSUE No 3. AUGUST 2025 "EXCITINGLY IRREGULAR"

PRICE: IF YOU LIVE IN BALLARAT, YOU PAY ALREADY. THE ATO IS JEALOUS

■ TECHNOCRACY KNOWS BEST ABOUT TEACHING AND LEARNING, PEASANTS. GET A CLUE

## Fed Uni fails neurodiverse students heinously, then lies through its fucking teeth about it

Year	ADHD	Male	Female	Autism	Male	Female	Learning Disability	Male	Female	Totals
2018	25	12	13	44	25	19	67	34	33	136
2019	15	9	6	20	13	7	28	9	19	63
2020	13	4	9	16	9	7	15	6	9	44
2021	26	12	14	19	6	13	16	5	11	61
2022	76	22	54	43	19	24	32	15	17	151
YTD 2023	66	15	51	38	20	18	20	8	12	124

HERE ARE the numbers for registrations with the Disability Liason Access Unit (DLAU) for support under 'reasonable adjustments' legislation by year; estimates based on ABS statistics for people who are Neurodiverse (ND—inclusive of everything from Autistic Spectrum Disorder and ADHD to Dyslexia, specific learning disorders, Complex PTSD and Acquired Brain Injury) suggests Fed has anywhere between 800-1000 ND students and staff at any one time. As you can see the numbers are held up by things like the fact that registration with the DLAU requires a diagnosis, which typically costs a few thousand bucks in the middle of rolling cost-of-living and housing affordability crises.

Fed is in the habit of letting management technocrats with MBAs dictate teaching and learning practices to staff with academic qualifications, Dip Eds and lived experience of neurodiversity. The fact that they bleed enrolments like a stuck pig might not then seem so surprising. The DLAU likes to claim that they have neurodiversity inclusion covered under the 'reasonable adjustments' status quo, but as their own registration statistics reveal, they really don't. Registration of ND students by year is mostly less than 10% coverage; in 2022, a bumper year, they managed 150 registrations out of 800-1000 estimated students. Every other year is even more dismal in comparison.

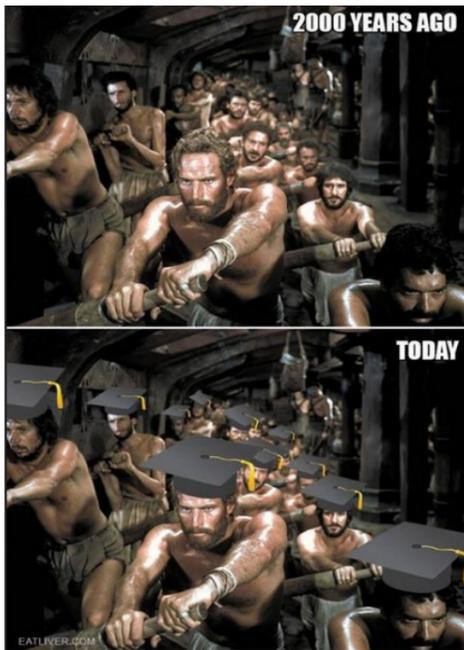
**This is not getting the job done. This is a grotesque failure.**

I guess you don't want to share these kinds of stats with project team members before you fuck them over, because your academic power structure is still ableist as living fuck. Something to remember for next time maybe.

### WHAT'S THE STORY THEN?

In 2023, *The Battler* was working at Fed Uni in a project on student retention. He was unable to complete the contract due to an intensely hostile work environment and protracted bullying antics from managerial thugs.

The adults in the room at Fed dealt with my complaint about workplace bullying by letting *The Battler's* contract expire. When he said anything, they sent out a slanderous email to all staff and students (see overleaf). Said workplace thugs then took *The Battler* to court, requested 3 IVOs for having to be asked about



workplace bullying allegations, which the court granted. The Zionist judge not only thought being asked about workplace bullying allegations was more harmful than workplace bullying, he refused to explain how slander was appropriate, or what evidence there was.

This was particularly confusing when I had plenty of evidence to the contrary that the kangaroo court refused to even accept into the room or look at. Here is the text of one email I sent around. It was part of my submission of evidence to the Ballarat Magistrates' Court that they refused to accept or look at. Not corrupt as fuck and happy to dish it out but fragile as shit when they have to catch any back though:

FROM A managerial perspective, Fed sure seems like a great example of organisations becoming too top-heavy and toxic when we preference bootlickers and enablers over innovators, and even basic competency, doesn't it?

As a paradigm example, let's consider the welfare regime based on reasonable adjustments:

Registrations by year from Fed Uni neurodiverse (ND) students for 'reasonable adjustments' supports with the disability liaison access unit (DLAU). Based on ABS data, THE DLAU estimates between 800-1000 ND students study at Fed; thus in 2021, for example they registered 61 of 800-1000. Despite these horrendous results, and despite serious ongoing retention problems, Fed claims its 'reasonable adjustments' supports are perfectly adequate. As do protected thugs in senior management who have built careers on grotesque failures. They make workplaces exceptionally hostile for anyone who notices.

- Neurodivergent (ND) students and staff have to have a diagnosis, costing thousands of dollars in the middle of perpetual housing and cost of living crises, to even be able to register for welfare supports with the DLAU. In addition to being extremely expensive and non-negotiable, it also takes a very long time.
- To have a diagnosis, ND students and staff have to be aware of neurodivergence, otherwise we internalise the ableism that prevents them from succeeding as something innate about ourselves. This appears to happen often. We have to be willing to disclose, which a lot of people aren't thanks to the culture of ableism, which is as normalised and taken for granted as racism in the Jim Crow South, or Australia in general.
- Meanwhile the administration can't be told anything about the built environment, about things like even the effects of fluorescent lighting on students and staff on the spectrum, or approaches to learning and assessment that force students into forms of such that suit the institution, rather than the needs of the individual student. It then wonders why it bleeds enrolments like a stuck pig.

Even if students or staff get a diagnosis, 'reasonable adjustments' are still based on a medical model of disability, which still treats the neurodivergent individual as the problem that needs fixing. It neglects root causes in the ableist social culture that sees neurodivergence as an abnormality, rather than considering ableism as a typically maladaptive trait of settler colonial hierarchies built on conquest and supremacism.

In researching these issues, it became pretty obvious to me that a correlation existed be-

tween the very small percentage of reasonable adjustment registrations (less than 20% of estimated ND students), and the high turnover of students. ND students enrol at an institution like Fed where neurotypical supremacism is naturalised and taken for granted, fail to acculturate and settle into a milieu that invisibilises large parts of our daily struggle, drift, fall behind, fall into difficulties, and drop out.

If the DLAU statistics are correct, it would seem that, at any given moment, Fed Uni (let alone anywhere) has at least 6-700 students\* who are completely unsupported where they need it most at any given time. Again it wonders why it bleeds enrollments like a stuck pig. What

\* In the quoted email from 2023, allegedly harassing other staff by exposing managerial incompetence and corruption, I lowball estimates for the ND population in line with the habit of minimising failure that seemed the norm in a work environment where you spend all of your days walking on eggshells . . . and complaining to department higher-ups about not even being able to wear a ring of garlic cloves around your neck when you come into work because all the meetings are done on teams.

The DLAU said likely as many as 1000 at the start of 2023; they know exactly what they're doing. Does it even matter whether it's 600 or a thousand considering every one is at risk of withdrawing from their course from burnout and sheer torment?

is of concern is that the DLAU also knows this, but not only stands by reasonable adjustments, but perpetrates aggression against researchers such as myself, who advocate moving beyond them. Hardly surprising really that there should be pushback from bureaucrats and neoliberal technocrats whose own power and status is invested in the dysfunctional, maladaptive and antisocial status quo.

The fact that bureaucratic pushback is enabled and supported by university management,

