

## **Justice and Order: Part 7**

In the 1990s, the term 'diploma mill' was a popular expression. The term referred to a belief that just by paying money you could be awarded with a degree. A degree could be awarded to people who did not attend class or sit exams from institutions that had not been government approved.

Today, government-approved education institutions also bestow degrees upon students who have not attended classes. This also extends to students not sitting exams. It is becoming gradually more difficult to see any difference between the phenomenon of today and the 1990s.

Historically, traditionally famous universities began to bestow honorary doctorate degrees on people considered successful in society. Originally, people who went to unauthorized institutions were typically middle school or high school graduates who active in society but could not attend university for economic reasons. These institutions existed to evaluate and bestow diplomas on people who had particular skills not able to be learnt at university.

The difference between government authorized and unauthorized universities is whether or not that institution will adhere to national teaching guidelines. It is possible to teach people how to make cars and aeroplanes according to teaching guidelines, however guidelines cannot be the basis of teaching people how to drive and maneuver those vehicles. This is because driving and maneuvering skills are not academic. Business management can be taught academically at authorized institutions, however practical day to day management skills cannot be taught. This is because the relevant domain of skills is too wide and the causal relationship is not constant. In fields that approved universities cannot award degrees, the unauthorized institutions existed for people. However, many unauthorized institutions ended in failure. This is because these institutions required more government funding and manpower than authorized universities.

In the Australian and United States constitutions, there is no authority granted to federal governments in respect of education. Each state has no choice but to correspond with degrees awarded from unauthorized institutions. In the United States, degree correspondence can differ from state to state. In some states the displaying of such an award as if it were a degree is prohibited. In other states people, middle school graduates who have worked for many years in car factories could be assessed on their level of proficiency and bestowed degrees in mechanical engineering. However, because these skills have not been learnt in accordance with teaching guidelines, it can be difficult to require people to complete the same work tasks as those who have received an authorized education.

In Australia, individual state governments do not issue these special measures. However, federal agencies do exist to certify university degrees obtained overseas. These agencies evaluate whether or not the degree is equivalent to one offered by an Australian university. There are many Ministry of

Education approved university degrees that are nonetheless not recognized in Australia. Where does the evaluation criteria exist? The federal Australian Constitution does not allow the evaluation of domestic universities, but will allow evaluation of foreign university degrees.