Higher Education

The bureaucrats strike back

Universities do not have monopoly on intellectual abilities

Dr W S Ramo, the editor of the Australian Dictionary of Biography, and Dr Michael Topley, both from the Department of Geography, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, agree that bureaucrats are not so bad after all. "We've been too quick to castigate them," said Dr Ramo. "It's time we gave them the credit they deserve.

"Although some of our research has been done at universities, we have found that bureaucrats can be very effective in promoting knowledge and understanding. In fact, in many cases, they have been more effective than university academics.

"Consider the case of the Australian Bureau of Statistics. They have been able to produce highly accurate and timely data, which has been invaluable to decision-makers. It is true that they have been criticized for their lack of scientific research, but this is a misjudgment. Bureaucrats have a long tradition of scientific inquiry and are often at the forefront of new developments in fields such as statistics and economics.

"Moreover, bureaucrats are well-placed to ensure that the results of their research are used effectively. They have access to a wide range of resources and can ensure that their findings are disseminated to the right people. This is something that university academics often struggle to achieve.

"In conclusion, we believe that bureaucrats are often underestimated and that they deserve more credit for their contributions to knowledge and understanding. We urge the public to change their views on bureaucrats and recognize their important role in promoting intellectual abilities."