

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

Outcome 3 - Higher Education, Research & International

Department of Education Question No. ED0007_15

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question

Commonwealth Scholarships

In regards to the Government's announcements about Commonwealth Scholarships:
(a) How much funding has been allocated over the forward estimates from the Commonwealth towards these scholarships? (b) Will universities be required to call scholarships paid for by fee revenue ""Commonwealth Scholarships""? (c) What activities will 'Commonwealth Scholarships' be able to cover? (d) How much revenue from a institutions Commonwealth Scholarship fund will an institution be able to allocate towards the administration of 'Commonwealth scholarships' at an institution? (e) Why was the threshold of 500 students chosen for an institution to be required to set up a Commonwealth Scholarship Fund? (f) What obligations will institutions of less than 500 EFTSL have towards providing scholarship or other equity activities? Does the Department have concerns that such institutions might have a competitive advantage over institutions with over 500 EFTSL?

Answer

- a) Nil
- b) The guidelines for the Commonwealth Scholarship scheme are still being developed.
- c) The guidelines for the Commonwealth Scholarship scheme are still being developed.
- d) The guidelines for the Commonwealth Scholarship scheme are still being developed
- e) When determining the Commonwealth supported EFTSL threshold, consideration was given to the capacity of providers to establish and manage the scheme balanced against the potential benefits to students. The Government determined that 500 EFTSL of Commonwealth supported students was a reasonable threshold below which the returns would not justify the administrative effort.
- f) There will be no requirements under the Commonwealth Scholarship scheme for institutions with less than 500 Commonwealth supported EFTSL. Any other equity obligations will depend on existing state, territory or federal legislation (such as the Disability Discrimination Act) or other requirements.