

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-2014

Outcome 3 - Higher Education, Research and International

Department of Education Question No. ED0237_14

Senator Carr asked on 20 November 2013, Hansard page 126

Question

Streamlining of visa processing – 22 institutions

Senator KIM CARR: So how were the 22 institutions selected? Mr Griew: The 22 institutions were selected on the basis of their risk rating from an immigration point of view. Senator KIM CARR: And the risk factors are rated from 1 to 5? pg 127 Mr Griew: I think that is not the right way to say it. You are referring to the assessment levels, which have now been collapsed to three as a part of the same announcement and process. There are a range of factors that have been taken into account in assessing the immigration risk rating, and it is on that basis that the 22 have been made an offer. Senator KIM CARR: You mentioned that the factors have been reduced to three. What are the three factors? Mr Griew: No, levels. Senator KIM CARR: What the three levels, now? So it is no longer five; it is three, is it? Ms Paul: That is right. Mr Griew: If you want more information about the factors for the assessment of education providers into these levels we should take that on notice and get you that advice from immigration.

Answer

The Department of Education is advised by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) that, in order to be invited to participate in the extended streamlined visa processing arrangements, education providers must be assessed to be of low immigration risk by DIBP.

The methodology used to calculate an education provider's immigration risk rating is based on the Assessment Level Framework. The risk indicators are:

- rate of visa cancellation (30 per cent weighting)
- rate of applications refused due to fraudulent documentation where the applicant lodged overseas (40 per cent weighting)
- rate of refusals (excluding fraud) where the applicant lodged overseas (10 per cent weighting)
- rate of student visa holders becoming unlawful non-citizens (20 per cent weighting)

Subject to the legislative change process, DIBP proposes to reduce the number of Assessment Levels from five to three and remove Assessment Levels 4 and 5. Currently no countries are assigned as Assessment Level 5. The proposed change would result in all students who are currently subject to Assessment Level 4 being transferred to Assessment Level 3. This change is expected to take effect in March 2014.

The proposed immigration risk ratings are allocated to education providers in accordance with the following benchmarks:

- Assessment Level 1 = risk index less than 1
- Assessment Level 2 = risk index between 1 and 2.7
- Assessment Level 3 = risk index more than 2.7.