

**Senate Committee: Education and Employment**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017**

**Outcome: Skills and Training**

**Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ16-001155**

Senator Cameron, Doug provided in writing.

***VET FEE-HELP – transition arrangements - 'grandfathered' students***

**Question**

In relation to the proposed VET Student Loans bill changes:

- (a) Please provide the number of students that are undertaking Diploma and Advanced Diploma as part-time study.
- (b) Please provide the average duration required to complete part time study for Diplomas and Advanced Diplomas on the eligible and ineligible course lists.
- (c) How many 'grandfathered' students do you expect will still be studying on 1 January 2018? What will happen to those students after 1 January 2018? Could they incur an out-of-pocket fee because they have to move from the VET FEE-HELP to VET Student Loans scheme from the start of 2018?
- (d) How many students will end up with out-of-pocket costs at the end of 2018 as a result of the proposed transition arrangements under the VET Student Loans bills?
- (e) How many students do you expect will be studying at providers that will not be approved under the new scheme? What will happen to those students after 1 January 2018? Will students in this position be eligible for VET FEE-HELP for all of their course units up to 31 December 2017? Will this apply to units started, or completed?
- (f) In the Regulatory Impact Statement you give three transition examples on page 23. How many people will be in Jessica's position? How many in Adeline's? How many in Jose's?
- (g) Have you done any modelling on how many students would have been impacted if this change had occurred in the past e.g. last year? What did it show?

**Answer**

- a) Part-time Diploma enrolments in 2015: 7,742; Part-time Advanced Diploma enrolments in 2015: 55,020
- b) The level of data collected by the department does not allow for the determination of average study durations for part-time students. According to the Australian Qualifications Framework, the volume of learning of a Diploma course is typically 1–2 years.
- c) (i) The Department of Education and Training does not have any modelling available.  
(ii) and (iii) Students who have remaining units of study can apply:
  - o to have their grandfathering period extended in exceptional circumstances beyond 1 January 2018 to a specified date on a case by case basis. Exceptional circumstances may be outlined in the Higher Education Support (VET) Guideline (a legislative instrument under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*) and may include students experiencing illness or caring responsibilities, or
  - o for a VET Student Loan if their course is identified on the eligible course list for VET Student Loans.
- d) & e) The department does not have any modelling available. The number of students impacted will depend on a number of factors including the number of students that opt-in to retain access to VET FEE-HELP.

- f) The examples in the transition section of the Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) are hypothetical, and the examples use unidentified providers and fictional courses. Further, each example identifies different options and decisions the individual needs to make, and it is unreasonable to assume these decisions. Hence, a calculation of the amount of people in each scenario would be incorrect.
- g) No modelling was completed on how many students would have been impacted if this change had been implemented last year. However, in 2015/16, a range of reforms were implemented and an accompanying RIS was published (<http://ris.dpmc.gov.au/2015/11/16/vocational-education-and-training-vet-fee-help-scheme-changes/>).