

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2013-2014**

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Child Care

Department of Education Question No. ED0299_14

Senator Hanson-Young provided in writing.

Question

Studying an early childhood degree

Changes announced on 3 December 2013 by the Assistant Minister for Education included improved recognition for staff studying a relevant early childhood degree. Reports suggest that there are a number of students taking leave from their studies and working as qualified educators and teachers without finishing their course.

1. Is the Department aware of any examples of this occurring?
2. Is the Department monitoring whether these students return to complete their degree?
3. What was the Department's role in this decision?
4. Was the Department involved in any consultation with sector representatives about this amendment to the National Quality Framework?
5. Did the Department anticipate this as a possible outcome from this amendment to the regulation?

Answer

1. The Department of Education is aware of media reports that students are taking leave from their studies to work as educators however the Department is not aware of any specific examples.
2. The National Quality Framework is governed by state and territory legislation. States and territories are responsible for implementing the legislation and ensuring services meet the requirements for early childhood teachers.
3. Under section 221 of the *Education and Care Services National Law 2010* the power to make regulations in accordance with this law rests with the Ministerial Council. The Department's role is to participate in officials meetings and provide advice to Ministers attending.
4. The Department of Education was not involved in specific consultation with the sector about this proposed amendment prior to the decision by SCSEEC. This issue has previously been raised with state and territory Regulatory Authorities and the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority.
5. It is unclear what possible outcome is being referred to.