

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. ED0003_14
Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question Student Support Branch

- a. What are the roles and responsibilities of the Student Support branch in the Department of Education?
- b. What programs is the Student Support branch in the Department of Education responsible for?
- c. How many FTE position are allocated to the Student Support Branch?
- d. Has this changed since 7 September 2013?
- e. As at 18 September 2013 when the new Government was sworn in, provide a breakdown of actual headcounts, and provide the number of staff on non-ongoing employment arrangements.
- f. Also please provide an up to date organisational structure for this branch.

Answer

- a. The Student Support Branch is responsible for managing elements of the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP), which promotes participation in Vocational Education and Training (VET) and higher education by providing income contingent loans to students to assist with the cost of their tuition. The Branch:
 - processes applications from registered training organisations or higher education institutions to become approved to offer VET FEE-HELP or FEE-HELP
 - manages existing approved providers, including overseeing their compliance with all HELP schemes
 - prepares and disseminates communication products for students and approved providers about the HELP schemes.
- b. The Student Support Branch is responsible for elements of HELP.
- c. There are currently 42 FTE allocated to the Student Support Branch.
- d. This has not changed since 7 September 2013.
- e. As at 18 September 2013, the headcount was 45, with no staff on non-ongoing employment arrangements.
- f. The Student Support Branch consists of four sections: Applications Management, Financial Viability and Payments, Strategy and Operations, and Communications and Student Support.