

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. ED0007_14
Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question Higher Education Funding Branch

What are the roles and responsibilities of the Higher Education Funding branch in the Department of Education? What programs is the Higher Education Funding branch in the Department of Education responsible for? How many FTE position are allocated to the Higher Education Funding branch? Has this changed since 7 September 2013? 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. Also please provide an up to date organisational structure for this branch.

Answer

The Higher Education Funding Branch

- provides advice on funding policy for Commonwealth supported and full fee paying student places at Australian higher education providers
- administers the Commonwealth Grants Scheme, including developing CGS funding agreements with higher education providers
- maintains forward estimates of expenditure for funding programmes under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA)
- coordinates legislative amendments, legislative instruments and guidelines relevant to HESA
- administers the HECS-HELP, OS-HELP, FEE-HELP schemes and National Institutes funding
- manages the development and administration of the Higher Education payments system (UniPay)
- provides the secretariat for the Review of the demand driven funding system.

As at 18 September 2013, 31 staff were occupying positions in the branch. This has not changed since 7 September 2013. There were no staff employed in non-ongoing employment arrangements.

Higher Education Funding Branch consists of four sections:

1. CGS Delivery and Policy
2. HELP Policy and Financing
3. Policy and Research Projects
4. Financial Estimates and Payments