

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-2014**

Outcome 3 - Higher Education, Research & International

**Department of Education Question No. ED0050_14
Senator Carr provided in writing.**

Question

Repayment threshold for HECS-HELP

- a. What is the current repayment threshold for HECS-HELP debts?
- b. How is this threshold set?
- c. What work has the Department done or commissioned on the appropriateness of the threshold?
- d. what work has the Department performed or commissioned on alternative repayment thresholds?
- e. What communication has the Department had with the Commission of Audit on HECS and HELP debts?
- g. What communication has the Department had with the Commission of Audit regarding graduate outcomes, including graduate salaries?

Answer

- a. HELP repayment rates for the 2013-14 income year are as follows:

Repayment rates for the 2013–14 income year

Repayment income	Repayment rate (% of repayment income)
Below \$51,309	Nil
\$51,309–\$57,153	4.0%
\$57,154–\$62,997	4.5%
\$62,998–\$66,308	5.0%
\$66,309–\$71,277	5.5%
\$71,278–\$77,194	6.0%
\$77,195–\$81,256	6.5%
\$81,257–\$89,421	7.0%
\$89,422–\$95,287	7.5%

\$95,288 and above	8.0%
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b. The threshold is set by Parliament in the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

c and d. The Department has not undertaken or commissioned any recent work specifically to examine the appropriateness of the repayment threshold or alternative repayment thresholds.

e. The Department has provided the Commission of Audit with general information on the HELP scheme.

g. The Department has not communicated with the Commission of Audit on graduate outcomes or graduate salaries.