

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012

Outcome 2 – Schools and Youth

Outcome 3 – Tertiary, Skills, International and Indigenous Strategy

DEEWR Question No. CA0018_12

Senator Scullion provided in writing.

ABSTUDY payments - maximum duration

Is there maximum time that an individual can receive ABSTUDY payments for a particular course?

Answer

The answer provided on 20 October 2011 (refer the Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Legislation Committee Hansard of 20 October 2011, page 91) mistakenly referred to the Youth Allowance and Austudy allowable time rules. This response refers to the ABSTUDY reasonable time rules.

For ABSTUDY – Tertiary students studying a course which has a duration of more than two years, a further two years ABSTUDY may be granted beyond the normal duration of the course.

For ABSTUDY students undertaking courses of two years or less duration, ABSTUDY may be granted for up to twice the normal course duration.

A student's eligibility under the reasonable time rules may be further extended by up to one year if:

- the student's progress has been impeded by physical, psychiatric or intellectual disability or other circumstance beyond her/his control; and
- the education institution recommends in writing that the student continues the course and indicates that the student is expected to complete the course in this year.

ABSTUDY also has a limits of assistance rule which limits the length of time a student may receive ABSTUDY. Once a student has reached that limit, ABSTUDY is no longer payable. Under this rule, ABSTUDY assistance is limited to:

- four years of study for any combination of Statement of Attainment, Certificate I or II level courses; and
- one undergraduate Bachelor degree; and
- either:
 - one degree at Master level and one degree at Doctorate level; or
 - two degrees at Masters level; or
 - two degrees at Doctorate level.