

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2014 - 2015

Outcome 1 - Employment

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ15-000046

Senator Xenophon provided in writing.

Relates to previous Department of Employment Question No EM1545_15

Question

Costs of training courses for job seekers

In response to a Question on Notice from Supplementary Budget Estimates in 2015 the Department advised that between 1 July 2009 and 31 August 2014, \$1,838,454 was paid by Job Services Australia providers from the Employment Pathway Fund to assist job seekers undertake various courses with the Excel Training company.

1. Given the Department is unaware of course completion rates, how does it determine whether value for money is achieved when paying for these training courses?
2. How much in total has been paid from the Employment Pathway Fund to training providers who offer courses to JSA job seekers?

Answer

1. Training has always been a feature of the employment services model. Under the Employment Services Deed 2012–15 and guidelines, completion results for training courses are not required to be recorded. The exception is where the provider is seeking to claim money in respect of an education outcome. In these circumstances the department's documentary evidence guidelines require a provider to retain:

- documentation from a training institution or the job seeker which demonstrates the successful completion of a semester of full-time study. The evidence must confirm:
 - whether the course was full-time or part-time
 - the contact hours attended each week (this applies if the job seeker is providing the evidence)
 - the Semester start and end dates
 - the length of the course
 - the name of the Job Services Australia provider's staff member recording the above information at the time it was obtained.

The retention of the above information is in keeping with the department's standard programme assurance framework and methodology which is underpinned by contract management, desktop monitoring and audit activity.

The Labour Market Assistance Outcome report for September 2014 shows that 28.3 per cent of job seekers were employed after leaving a vocational training course.

In the 2015-16 Budget (under the 'Engaging Early School Leavers' measure) Education Outcomes were changed effective from 1 January 2016. The change extends Education Outcomes for job seekers up to 21 years of age. The qualification for an Education Outcome has also been raised to Year 12 or a Certificate III.

All jobactive providers will be required to upload documentary evidence of completion or attainment of the relevant qualification at the time of lodgement of their claims.

2. Total expenditure from the Employment Pathway Fund on training from 1 July 2009 to 28 February 2015 is \$854.2 million with respect to 839,635 job seekers.

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