

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2015 - 2016**

Outcome: Skills and Training

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ16-000534

Senator Carr, Kim provided in writing.

VET FEE-HELP complaints – raising awareness

Question

The department has been informing the public about VET FEE-HELP complaints processes by means of its websites and a hotline. However, the targets of VET FEE-HELP scams are often people who are not used to looking up websites – they might be unable to speak English, or be semi-literate, or they might not have access to a computer. What other methods are being used for awareness-raising about both complaints mechanisms and what potential students should look out for and ask providers?

Answer

An anti-scam flyer was developed and distributed from 2015 as part of the department's VET FEE-HELP awareness campaign. In addition to access to the flyer via the department's corporate website and the *Study Assist* website, this flyer was distributed to 11 key Centrelink offices initially and is intended for further distribution nationally in 2016. A complementary anti-scam video is also being developed which will be played later this year in the public waiting areas at all Centrelink offices with video facilities.

In addition to the anti-scam flyer, a student fact sheet is also available on the *Study Assist* website which further explains the VET FEE-HELP reforms introduced from 1 January 2016.

Both the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and NSW Fair Trading have developed educational materials and activities aimed at alerting consumers about inappropriate conduct by training providers and marketers in relation to marketing VET FEE-HELP courses. These initiatives are also supported by compliance and enforcement activities.