

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017

Outcome: Higher Education Research and International

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ17-000082

Senator O'Neill, Deborah asked on 01 March 2017, Proof Hansard page 126

Engagement with NTEU

Question

Senator O'NEILL: Could I ask how many times the minister has met with the NTEU to discuss the future higher education policy?

Senator Birmingham: I do not recall but I know my officers had engagements with them.

Senator O'NEILL: Have you ever met with the NTEU in the course of these deliberations about the sector?

Senator Birmingham: Not that I recall.

Senator O'NEILL: So no engagement with the NTEU?

CHAIR: That is not what the minister said. Please try not to verbal him at quarter to 10.

Senator O'NEILL: I am sure he would tell me if he had met with them. It would have been a scintillating conversation. I am sure he would remember if he had met with them.

CHAIR: He said he could not recall. Senator O'Neill, the minister was clear: he could not recall.

Senator O'NEILL: Would you take that on notice then? Your diary might assist you with your recollections.

Senator Birmingham: Sure.

Senator O'NEILL: Have you met with student groups to discuss higher education changes?

Senator Birmingham: Yes.

Senator O'NEILL: How many times have you met and with which groups—maybe on notice?

Senator Birmingham: I will take that on notice.

Answer

Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, Minister for Education and Training, regularly meets with student groups and individual students as he travels around the country, consulting on higher education reform and other aspects of education policy. The Minister has met representatives from the National Union of Students (NUS), the Council of Postgraduate Associations (CAPA), the Australian Medical Students Association, and other student groups. The Minister hosted a student intern in his Parliament House office.

The Minister's advisers have met with the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) to discuss higher education issues.

The NTEU, ANU Students' Association, Curtin Student Guild, and Flinders University Student Association provided submissions to the Australian Government's policy options paper *Driving Innovation, Fairness and Excellence in Australian Higher Education*, and 60 further individual submissions were received from people who self-identified as students. The Government is taking all these submissions into account in developing its reform package. The NUS did not provide a submission.