

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017

Outcome: Agency: ASQA

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ17-000101

Senator Cameron, Doug asked on 01 March 2017, Proof Hansard page 17

ASQA - students stranded without qualifications

Question

Senator CAMERON: Yes, 800 students were left stranded without qualifications and in debt; is that correct?

Prof. Lavarch: I cannot comment on the debt situation, Senator, because that does not come to ASQA in terms of—

Senator CAMERON: But they were stranded without a qualification?

Prof. Lavarch: I cannot give you the number. I do not have in front of me what numbers there were at a particular point in time.

Senator CAMERON: Can you take that one on notice?

Answer

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) has provided the following response

In September 2016, ASQA was advised by MHM Australasia Pty Ltd (RTO 6980 – The Australasian College Broadway) that it had 665 students enrolled. This information was provided during the course of a compliance audit activity.

ASQA is aware that MHM Australasia Pty Ltd had student tuition assurance protection with the Australian Council for Private Education and Training (ACPET). This tuition assurance protection is designed to assist students when their education provider is no longer able to deliver training, usually due to closure.

Having appropriate tuition assurance protection is a requirement of being a VET FEE-HELP provider under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, and is a requirement of being a VET Student Loans provider under the *VET Student Loans Act 2016*.

ACPET has provided a [Student FAQ](#) on its website for students of MHM Australasia Pty Ltd. The FAQ provides information to continuing students and students who have recently graduated.

- Recent graduates – recent graduates will receive their certificate / testamur via the administrator, Rodgers Reidy.
- Continuing students – continuing students are provided with two options:
 1. Students can continue with their study at a replacement RTO. ACPET will source a similar course of study with another provider and students will not be required to pay for any unit they started with MHM Australasia Pty Ltd but did not complete.
 2. Students can withdraw from their study and receive a partial loan debt re-credit for units that have been paid for but not started.

ACPET has informed ASQA that it started to make contact with students of MHM Australasia Pty Ltd in January 2017. However, the administrator did not provide to ASQA or ACPET the student records for MHM Australasia Pty Ltd and, as a result, ACPET has not been able to transfer students to another RTO to continue studies. ASQA is also unable to confirm if the number of students affected by the RTO closure has varied from the 665 students enrolled as at September 2016.

ASQA has responded to this matter by obtaining student records from the company that managed the student management system of MHM Australasia Pty Ltd. ASQA is now in the process of making these records available to ACPET so that it may meet its obligations and assist all continuing students.