

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

Outcome 3 - Higher Education, Research & International

Department of Education Question No. ED0033_15

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question

UK policy changes to student loans and fees

1. The writer of an article in The Guardian (27 May 2014) makes the point that the UK policy changes in relation to student loans and fees included crucial differences from the Australian Government's package, namely, in the UK: • Outstanding debt is written off after 30 years • No real interest rate applies until the graduate is earning an income • Fees are not deregulated, but capped at £9,000. These facts, according to The Guardian, are key to understanding why the new UK student financing system seems not to have deterred low-SES students. Can you confirm that? Did the Australian Government – and the department – consider adopting the measures adopted in the UK, outlined above? Why did it reject these measures? 2. The article referred to also says that the British Government has done a good job in informing the public clearly about the new system and its financial safeguards. How does that compare, to date, with the performance of the Australian Government?

Answer

1. The Department does not comment publicly on, or release information about, the Government's deliberations on policy.
2. The Department does not comment on the performance of the Australian Government.