

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. ED0048_15

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question

Proposed changes to the interest rate on HELP loans

1. In advising the Government about proposed changes to the interest rate on HELP loans, did the Department seek legal advice? What was the content of that advice, on the matter of the legality of summarily and unilaterally changing the terms of the loans of HELP debtors? 2. What does the Department say to the criticism that changing the terms of existing HECS loans is similar to unilaterally changing the terms of a contract?

Answer

The Department cannot disclose the nature or content of advice sought in the Budget context.