

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

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

Outcome: Higher Education Research and International

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000313

Senator Sinodinos, Arthur asked on 03 June 2015, Proof Hansard page 60

Increased student contributions for maths and science (2012-13 budget)

Question

Mr Griew: Of going to do maths, science and those units. There was no appreciable pick-up in the numbers doing science and maths degrees as a result of discounting the fees. They were doing it anyway. So you are giving a discount to people who would have chosen those subjects anyway. That was the problem.

Senator SINODINOS: And how much did that discount end up costing?

Mr Griew: That goes to the question of how much the government of the day saved by removing the discount. I said I thought it was in the order of \$400 million. But I may be wrong, in which case we will correct it on the record on notice.

Answer

The majority of the cost of reducing student contribution amounts for maths and science students was in providing funding to compensate universities for the lower student contribution amounts. It was estimated this would have cost around \$300 million per year by 2013.