

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. SQ15-000459

Senator Carr, Kim provided in writing.

Office of Learning and Teaching

Question

In regards to the decision to outsource the Office of Learning and Teaching:

- (a) How will the new body guarantee its independence?
- (b) Won't there be a potential for conflict of interest, if the entity is established in one or more universities, but not similarly associated with the other universities? Will a university, essentially, be asked to assess applications from itself?
- (c) How will this problem be handled?
- (d) Will the Minister be signing off on grants made by this entity or have any other role?"

Answer

- (a) It is expected that the governance of the new institute will be settled through consultation and by the institute, the host institution, and the Government.
- (b) The department will address and manage conflict of interest and ensure that appropriate safeguards are written into the contract.
- (c) The department will address and manage the potential for conflicts of interest through the request for proposal process and the final contract with the host institution.
- (d) The Minister will continue to approve funding made under the Promotion of Excellence in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education programme.