

## Senate Committee: Education and Employment

### QUESTION ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

#### Outcome: Skills and Training

#### Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000509

Senator Kim Carr provided in writing.

Also refer to previous Question No. SQ15-000160

#### **VET FEE-HELP**

##### **Question**

1. How many students have contacted the Department to request information on how to have a VET FEE-HELP loan waived due to problems with an RTO?
2. What advice are students given when making inquiries about having a VET FEE-HELP loan waived?
3. What advice does the Study Assist hotline provide when questioned about having a VET FEE-HELP loan waived?
4. How many VET FEE-HELP loans have been waived?
5. How many VET FEE-HELP loans have been waived due to quality concerns?

##### **Answer**

1. The department does not keep specific records of enquiries which may lead to a waiver. The department ensures that a student is given all the information they may need which may include grievance procedures and waiver procedures.
2. Under the current arrangements established in 2008, there are limited circumstances for students to seek to have their debt revoked. Under these processes, students are required to first seek a remittance of debt through their provider. If students have exhausted all formal avenues with their provider for remittance of their VET FEE-HELP debt, they are advised they can seek a waiver through the Department of Finance. The Department of Education and Training provides the student with information on how to apply through the Department of Finance for a waiver of their VET FEE-HELP debt.

Students will also be informed of new processes that will be introduced from 1 January 2016, subject to the passage of legislation, to streamline debt remission and revocation processes for students under VET FEE-HELP.

3. Students are advised to send their enquiry to [tsenquiries@education.gov.au](mailto:tsenquiries@education.gov.au) to request assistance if the Study Assist hotline agent cannot answer their question. The department then provides advice as per question 2.
4. Waivers are administered by the Department of Finance. The Department of Finance has advised that no VET FEE-HELP debts were waived between 1 January 2008 and 22 June 2015. However, the department is aware of a number that have been waived by providers.
5. See answer to question 4.