

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018**

Outcome: Higher Education Research and International

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ17-000728

Senator Carr, Kim provided in writing.

Higher Education Reform package

Question

The Higher Education Infrastructure Working Group Final Report 2015 warns that: The Working Group cautions against over-reliance on the assumption that students will accept any level of cross-subsidisation of research and research infrastructure from their tuition fees on the basis of it enhancing the prestige of their degrees. We believe there is potential for significant consumer backlash, from both domestic students and from international students and their families, if they are asked to pay higher fees that in their minds bear little relationship to resources directed to their education. (Page 59)
What interventions in the Higher Education Reform package will mitigate against student fees through HELP being further used to meet both the indirect costs of research not funded by the Commonwealth, and the underfunding for research infrastructure by the Commonwealth?

Answer

The Australian Government's higher education reform package includes the establishment of a more transparent framework for the collection of financial data from higher education providers in order to regularly report on the cost of teaching and research by field of education.

This will improve the accountability of the higher education sector for spending while maintaining the long-standing policy of successive Australian Governments to allow universities, as autonomous institutions, to determine the internal allocation of funding for their various activities.