

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

Outcome 3 - Higher Education, Reform & Support

Department of Education Question No. ED0403_15

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question

Higher Education Support Act 2003

Is parliamentary approval required for the Minister to choose to spend less than the maximum specified by the Higher Education Support Act 2003 on the: (a) Disability Support Programme (b) Diversity and Structural Reform (c) Higher Education Participation Program (d) National Institutes (e) Promotion of Excellence in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (f) Quality Initiatives

Answer

Parliamentary approval is not required for the Minister to choose to spend less than the maximum specified by the relevant guidelines for any of the identified programmes except for the Disability Support Programme.

All of the identified programmes are funded under 'Division 41-Other Grants' of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. The Other Grants Guidelines specify how the grants are to be paid for each programme. For all except the Disability Support Programme, the Other Grants Guidelines indicates that the Minister or the Minister's delegate can decide to spend any amount up to the maximum available in a given year.

For the Disability Support Programme, the Other Grants Guidelines set out a method for determining payments. If the Minister wished to vary the approach to making grants under this programme, he would need to seek the agreement of the Parliament by tabling amendments to the Guidelines.