

**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. ED0697\_15**

**Senator Carr provided in writing.**

**Question**

***Pooling of Scholarship funds***

Pooling of Scholarship funds: (a) Can the department explain what factors would contribute to the additional cost that you assert would accompany a pooled scholarship scheme? What would be the approximate quantum of those costs? (b) How would a pooled scheme reduce institutional autonomy in any significant sense? (c) What favourable policy outcome arises if the oldest and wealthiest universities have substantially more scholarship funds than regional or outer metropolitan universities, which at the moment cater more specifically to the needs of disadvantaged students?

**Answer**

- a) Compared with the institution-based Commonwealth Scholarship Scheme model, pooling of scheme funds would require management in a similar way to a government programme. Administrative costs would relate to processes such as collecting funds, calculating and distributing payments, monitoring funds and activities and more detailed compliance. There would be significant costs both to the department and in the universities.
- b) Institutional autonomy would be reduced if funds are pooled because the level of funding available would be determined following a process managed by government, not as a result of independent decisions by universities.
- c) The scholarship scheme is designed to ensure all institutions will be able to undertake outreach to attract and retain more students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Students from all backgrounds will be better supported to choose where to study and to successfully participate and graduate from their studies.