

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017

Outcome: Skills and Training

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ16-000938

Senator Collins, Jacinta provided in writing

Adult Migrant English program - different class sizes and teacher qualifications

Question

What is the rationale for the different class sizes and teacher qualifications requirements in these two streams?

What is the evidence base on which the Department has determined that learning English in the social English stream is “less rigorous” and therefore the “qualifications required can be less rigorous”

Answer

- The rationale for the different class sizes in the tuition streams is based on the expected progression rates of clients. The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) service providers will be bound by outcome-focussed Key Performance Indicators in relation to the improved English language proficiency of clients. Due to different outcomes achieved, the required rate of progression for AMEP clients in the Pre-employment stream is higher than that of the Social English stream. The slightly larger class size for the Social Stream is also more suited to the conversation-based learning activities that will form a key part of tuition for that stream. Current AMEP class sizes are 22.
- Teachers of both streams must meet the qualifications standards set by the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* legislation. All AMEP teachers must also meet the qualification standards set by the licencing agreement of the VET course or unit delivered to AMEP clients.
- In addition to this, the department has also mandated that all AMEP teachers must have an Australian three year undergraduate degree and a post graduate Teacher of English as a Second Language (TESOL) qualification. The Department of Education and Training has determined that high quality and qualified teachers who have yet to complete their post graduate TESOL qualification can deliver AMEP Social Stream tuition while they complete their studies.
- The Social English stream has slightly different requirements standard for teacher qualifications as the pace and progression of clients in this stream will be at a slower rate than the Pre-employment stream noting the differences in the outcomes. The standard also acknowledges that highly qualified teachers can be difficult to source in many regional and remote areas of Australia. This standard will enable AMEP service providers to attract and develop talented teachers within AMEP and offer them a career pathway within the program.
- The Social Stream was developed following public consultation and the ACIL Allen evaluation. The reforms to AMEP were developed to provide flexibility in tuition delivery, including for those clients who may want to learn English in a more conversational and social context. The Social stream aims to attract a cohort of migrant who would otherwise not enrol in AMEP.