

**Senate Committee: Education and Employment**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2016 - 2017**

**Outcome: Higher Education Research and International**

**Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ16-001075**

Senator Carr, Kim provided in writing.

***Watt Review - humanities, arts and social sciences disciplines***

**Question**

What measures will be implemented to ensure humanities, arts and social sciences disciplines remain viable and that researchers and research students are not unfairly disadvantaged?

**Answer**

The Australian Government provides extensive support for research activity in the humanities, arts and social sciences (HASS) disciplines, including through research block grants and the Australian Research Council's (ARC) funding schemes. In doing so, the Government does not seek to direct support to specific disciplines. This ensures that through the ARC's National Competitive Grants Program the highest quality research across disciplines can be supported and through research block grants universities have the flexibility to support their research priorities.

Consistent with this approach, the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) process for assessing quality of university research uses a methodology that is sensitive to the practices of different disciplines. For example, the ERA assessments of many HASS disciplines are informed by a process of peer review of research outputs (e.g. books, journal articles, or non-traditional outputs such as original creative works, curated exhibitions etc.) conducted by subject matter experts.

Similarly, the new national assessment of the engagement and impact of university research is being developed so as to capture the contribution of all disciplines. Further detail is included in SQ16-001002.