

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Additional Estimates Hearing 2012-13
13 February 2013

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

TOPIC: Diversity of post graduate degrees

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 13 February 2013, page 64)

QUESTION No.: AI-28

Senator RHIANNON: Thank you. I also wanted to pick up on some issues to do with postgraduate degrees and trends amongst a diversity of research degrees that are available. Can you comment on the diversity and numbers of postgraduate degrees and what factors are impacting on the numbers and the diversity?

Ms Baly: Senator, could you clarify which postgraduate degrees you are talking about.

Senator RHIANNON: I was actually just trying to explore this issue.

Ms Baly: Some of these may be questions for us, and some of them may be questions for our colleagues in outcome 3, because there are some postgraduate courses that are research degree courses, which are our responsibility, and there are other postgraduate courses that are not our responsibility. If they are not research-based qualifications then our colleagues in outcome 3 will be able to answer those questions for you.

Senator RHIANNON: I am trying to get an assessment of whether there is a correlation—or, really, what is happening with postgraduate degrees in terms of the diversity and the flow-on both into academia and to wider jobs, and the degree to which there is quantitative data on this. I am just trying to see if you are tracking it and how you are tracking it.

Ms Baly: We certainly look at the job destinations, if you like, of research PhDs. I would need to get you precise figures, but I think about 50 per cent go into the education sector, about 30 per cent go into the private sector and the rest go into government and NGO-type sectors. Those are the current research workforce outcomes of PhD candidates. I will double-check those figures and correct them on notice if necessary.

Senator RHIANNON: Of that 50 per cent who went into education, is that into academia or education across the board?

Ms Baly: It is into education more broadly. The majority would be into academia.

Senator RHIANNON: Within that, can you give us a breakdown of how many are into academia and full-time academia. Would you have that information available?

Ms Baly: I do not know, but I can check.

ANSWER

The department tracks the job destinations of students that have completed a postgraduate degree by research. According to a survey by Graduate Careers Australia, research masters and PhD graduates completing a degree in 2011 found full-time employment in the following sectors: 39% in the higher education sector; 10% in other areas of education; 25% in the private sector; 10% in the health sector; 7% in government; and 9% in other sectors.