

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2005-2006 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 2

Output Group: 2.4 – Funding for higher education

DEST Question No. E405_06

Senator Nettle provided in writing.

Question:

If the guidelines that conferred HEP status had been disallowed by the Parliament or at the very least not dealt with until June what steps would the department have been liable to take to mitigate any enrolment problems experienced by students and institutions as a result?

Answer:

Steps to mitigate enrolment problems

The Department does not believe that it would have had any liabilities arising from the Parliamentary disallowance of an institution's approval as Higher Education Provider under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA).

The Department advised all institutions approved by the delegate but still subject to the Parliamentary disallowance period that:

- their approval as a Higher Education Provider was subject to a Parliamentary disallowance period;
- FEE-HELP would not be available to their students until after the 15 day Parliamentary disallowance period had expired; and
- students must be told that FEE-HELP loans would only become available if and when final approval as a HEP was granted.

Any enrolment problems experienced by students and institutions, as a result of actions taken by the institution, would have been the responsibility of institutions to address.