

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace  
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-2011**

**Outcome 4 - Employment & Participation Policy**

**DEEWR Question No.EW0665\_11**

**Senator Nash asked on 21/10/2010, Hansard page 100.**

**Question**

**COST OF TERTIARY EDUCATION - REGARDING EW0043\_11**

Senator NASH—I was not quite sure where to place it, given that it is new. Can I start with one of the answers to questions on notice asked by Senator Back, EW0043\_11. It was regarding the cost of tertiary education. The question was: Why is the cost for accessing a tertiary education higher for country students than metropolitan students? If a family does not have the means to pay for access to a tertiary education for their student, what assistance is available if it is farm assets? .....

Ms Paul—Would you like us to take it on notice and try to give you some exposition of that? I am not sure we necessarily accept the proposition, but I am quite happy to have a go at— .....

Senator Chris Evans—Can we just be clear, before we take it on notice and then end up having a similar discussion next time, that you want to identify what drivers make it more expensive for rural students to attend? Senator NASH—There is right. Ms Paul—Things like transport costs and that sort of thing. ....

CHAIR—Let us leave it that the department takes it on notice again and, given the explanatory background to the purpose of the question, they can have another go at it.

**Answer**

Question on Notice EW0043\_11 asked “Why is the cost for accessing a tertiary education higher for country students than metropolitan students?”.

The Department responded that rural and regional students may need to move away from home to access secondary and tertiary education opportunities because of the location of their family home in relation to the educational institution where they intend to study.

While the department does not model information on the average costs for students at different educational institutions, it is accepted that the costs for students living away from home are generally higher than for students living at home with their families, whether a young person is from a rural or metropolitan household.

The Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education noted the additional living and study costs associated with higher education enrolment, particularly for those students who need to move away from home to study (page 47) and identified rent as a contributing factor.

Student Start-Up Scholarships, introduced from 1 April 2010, are available to eligible

higher education students receiving income support to assist them with the up-front costs of study.

The response to EW0043\_11 outlined the higher 'away from home' student payment rates which reflect the increased costs of students living away from home to study as well as the availability to eligible students of Rent Assistance to assist with the cost of private rental, including university college accommodation. The response also described the Relocation Scholarships, introduced as part of the Australian Government's reforms to student income support to assist eligible students with the cost of establishing accommodation, as well as other assistance available to rural and regional students.