

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017**

Outcome: Higher Education Research and International

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ17-000206

Senator Carr, Kim provided in writing

Tuition fees

Question

What is the rationale for ensuring that students are advised of the amount of Commonwealth funding being used to substitute for the tuition fee that would otherwise be payable by a student?

What is the legislative basis for asserting that a tuition fee would be otherwise paid by a domestic student if there was no Commonwealth support for a HDR program?

Answer

Based on feedback from students it was apparent that many higher degree by research (HDR) students supported under the former Research Training Scheme (RTS) and International Postgraduate Research Scholarships (IPRS) were unaware of the level of Australian Government support provided for their study. The new arrangements for the Research Training Program (RTP) require that higher education providers (HEP) now clearly identify to each HDR candidate the amount of Government funding being used to substitute for the tuition fee that would otherwise be payable by a student. This requirement provides increased transparency for students in relation to the level of Government support provided.

HEPs are required under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) to charge tuition fees for each unit of study in which it enrolls students (HESA paragraph 19–85). These tuition fees are payable by an HDR student unless an exemption applies, for example where a student's tuition fees are being supported through the RTP.