

**Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

**Outcome 3 - Higher Education, Research & International**

**Department of Education Question No. ED0010\_15**

**Senator Carr provided in writing.**

**Question**

***Australian Postgraduate Awards***

1. How many Australian Postgraduate Awards will be awarded in 2014-15? Why does the portfolio budget statement say that up to 3,500 APA's will be awarded in the out years of the forward estimates period? 2. What is the basis, or formula, for the awarding of Australian Postgraduate Awards to universities? What data are universities obliged to report to the Department on the provision and progress of APA's to students? 3. Are there any diversity or equity requirements, policies or reporting obligations on universities in relation to the APA program?

**Answer**

1. The Government provides funding and higher education providers (HEPs) select recipients, on a calendar year basis rather than a financial year basis. Funding to HEPs provide for 3,499 full-time equivalent Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA) in 2014. The actual number of commencing APAs that will be awarded in 2014 will depend on allocations by HEPs and the balance of full-time and part-time students.

The Government will provide funding for up to 3,500 commencing APAs over the forward estimates period. The current APA funding profile allows for approximately 3,495 to 3,500 new APAs to be funded in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

2. APAs are allocated to HEPs using a formula that rewards performance in attracting research income, producing research publications and the successful completion of research degrees by students. In the APA allocations, formula research income is weighted at 40%, student completions are weighted at 50% and research publications are weighted at 10%. The detailed formula for the allocation of APA funding to HEPs is specified in Section 2.5.5 of the *Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research) 2012*.

The Department receives some data on the provision and progress of APAs to students through the Higher Education Student Data Collection. In this data collection universities flag students as 'enrolled in an APA' as part of their usual student reporting processes.

3. No.