

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-2014

Outcome 3 - Higher Education, Research and International

Department of Education Question No. ED0051_14
Senator Carr provided in writing.

Review of Higher Education Regulation Question

With regard to the Review of Higher Education Regulation:

- a. What is the timeframe for responding to the Review of Higher Education Regulation?
- b. Which area of the Department is working on the response?
- c. What kind of resourcing does this area have, in terms of staff, FTE, budget and access to external resources including consultants?
- d. Have any consultants been contracted to assist with this work?
- e. How is this team interacting with the newly appointed corporate team to reduce regulation which is being set up in each Department?
- f. Is there a formal reporting structure between these two teams?
- g. If not, then how will you avoid duplication of work?

Answer

- a. The Government's response, in which all recommendations of the *Review of Higher Education Regulation* (the Review) were accepted, was announced on 23 October 2013 by the Hon Christopher Pyne MP, Minister for Education.

The recommendations will be implemented over different timeframes. A number of short-term actions have already been taken or are underway, including:

- the issuance of a Ministerial Direction to the Chief Executive Officer of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) to take certain actions
 - the establishment of a TEQSA Advisory Council to advise the Minister and TEQSA on reducing regulation, and
 - the preparation of amendments to the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* to increase the efficiency of the national regulator.
- b. Primary responsibility for the response to the Review rests with the Deregulation Taskforce within the Quality and Support Group. The recommendations of the Review are wide-ranging, however, and several areas of the department are working on implementing aspects of the recommendations. For example, significant inter-related work is being undertaken by the Quality Enhancement Branch, Quality and Support Group regarding Recommendations 7, 8, 9 and 10, and the Data and Analysis Branch, Higher Education and Research Group regarding Recommendations 6, 8, 10 and 11.
 - c. As several areas of the department are working on the recommendations of the Review, it is difficult to precisely quantify the resources involved.

Similarly, there is no specific allocation in the budget for responding to the Review. Funding from within departmental resources is being made available for some activities, such as the establishment and support of the TEQSA Advisory Council. No additional or external resources have been accessed at this time.

- d. Since the completion of the Review, no consultants have been contracted to assist with the work.
- e. The Deregulation Taskforce will meet regularly with the Deregulation Unit, which is the corporate team to which the question refers.
- f. There will be no formal reporting structure between the Deregulation Taskforce and the Deregulation Unit.
- g. Duplication of work will be avoided through frequent discussions between the two teams as mentioned in the response to Part E, and through the distinct roles of the teams. The Deregulation Taskforce is responsible for the delivery of the response to the Review. It is expected that the corporate Deregulation Unit will support the deregulation agenda across the whole of the Department of Education.