

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Additional Estimates Hearing 2012-13
13 February 2013

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

TOPIC: Demand driven funding and industry needs

REFERENCE: Written Question - Senator Rhiannon

QUESTION No.: AI-103

1. In October last year the Minister was reported as saying the student-demand driven system is not working because too many students are choosing courses that do not meet skills shortages or industry demand: What types of courses are showing high student demand and which courses are suffering from a lack of demand?
2. What trends are emerging with university applications and offers this year so far?
3. What is being considered to address this?

ANSWER

1. Table 1 and Charts 1 and 2 show trends in eligible applications by field of education since 2001. Fields of education showing strong student demand over the period include Health (where eligible applications have increased by 84 per cent since 2001), Natural and Physical Sciences (up 54 per cent), Architecture and Building (up 49 per cent) and, Engineering and Related Technologies (up 44 per cent). Fields of education showing weaker student demand over the period include Information Technology (down 60 per cent), Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies (down 18 per cent) and, Management and Commerce (down 15 per cent).
2. Changes in the number of applications for the main round from 2012 to 2013 are shown in Table 2 below. The fields of education showing strong growth in demand are Agricultural, Environmental and Related Studies (up 6.5 per cent), Natural and Physical Sciences (up 3.6 per cent), Information Technology (up 3.3 per cent) and Health (up 3.1 per cent). The fields of education showing weaker demand are Architecture and Building (down 10.1 per cent), Creative Arts (down 3.5 per cent), and Management and Commerce (down 2.2 per cent).

The changes in the number of offers for the main round from 2012 to 2013 are shown in Table 3. The fields of education showing strong growth are Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies (up 10.4 per cent) and Natural and Physical Sciences (up 4.1 per cent). The fields of education showing a fall in growth are Architecture and Building (down 7.5 per cent) and Information Technology (down 2.4 per cent).

3. Research into influences of students' choices of courses suggests that students are most influenced by their personal interests with employment related factors generally ranking as the second strongest influence. In this context, the Government has limited ability to influence the choices students make regarding their course of study. The Government publishes information

regarding the employment outcomes and conditions for an extensive range of qualifications and occupations to inform student choice. Where there are industries experiencing areas of workforce need or skills shortage, it is in the best interest of these industries to promote their businesses in order to attract prospective students.

The department monitors the evolving change in demand for places as well as the number of places made available by universities for fields of education. The department is currently in the process of negotiating 2014-2016 Compacts with universities, which will include discussions with a focus on how universities are meeting community and industry needs.

Table 1: Eligible applications by field of education, 2001=100

Fields of Education	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
01 Natural and Physical Sciences	100	106	108	110	105	100	96	97	114	128	137	154
02 Information Technology	100	89	71	55	47	38	35	34	37	39	38	40
03 Engineering and Related Technologies	100	102	102	102	101	104	109	117	129	131	135	144
04 Architecture and Building	100	103	112	122	120	127	131	132	145	152	152	149
05 Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	100	104	108	104	88	82	79	101	82	86	81	82
06 Health	100	109	122	128	129	135	148	144	149	171	176	184
07 Education	100	114	122	125	128	123	115	104	101	107	102	104
08 Management and Commerce	100	100	99	98	94	88	86	83	85	83	84	85
09 Society and Culture & 10 Creative Arts	100	111	115	112	107	106	103	104	112	117	114	113
TOTAL	100	106	109	109	106	104	104	103	108	116	117	120

a – the fields of education of 11 Food Hospitality and Personal Services; and 12 Mixed Field Programs have been excluded due to the small number of students, the high volatility of growth rates and the shorter time series which starts in 2005

Chart 1: Positive Growth in Eligible Applications Chart 2: Negative Growth in Eligible Applications

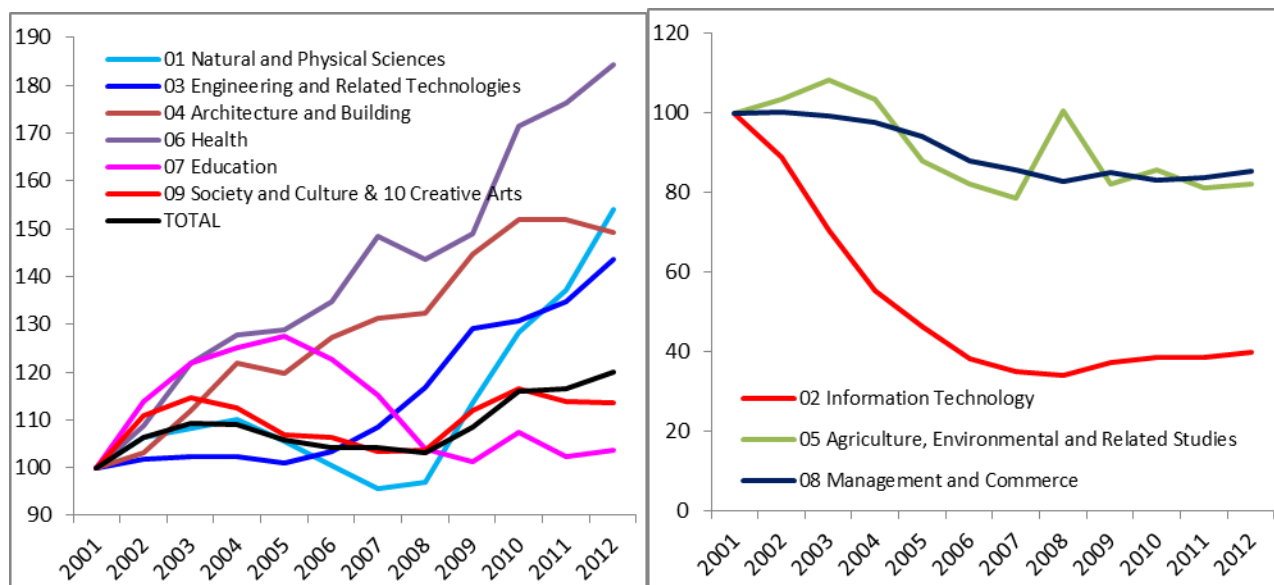


Table 2 Applications through Tertiary Admission Centres - main round data 2012 and 2013

Field of education	2012	2013	% change
01 Natural and Physical Sciences	22,752	23,578	3.6
02 Information Technology	6,729	6,953	3.3
03 Engineering and Related Technologies	17,924	18,133	1.2
04 Architecture and Building	9,092	8,177	-10.1
05 Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	4,091	4,357	6.5
06 Health	67,963	70,095	3.1
07 Education	22,898	22,525	-1.6
08 Management and Commerce	34,391	33,630	-2.2
09 Society and Culture	53,539	53,831	0.5
10 Creative Arts	26,035	25,120	-3.5
Total	267,391	268,169	0.3

b – the data in the table do not add to the totals as the Fields of Education of 11 Food Hospitality and Personal Services; and 12 Mixed Field Programs have been excluded

Table 3 Offers through Tertiary Admission Centres - main round data 2012 and 2013

Field of education	2012	2013	% change
01 Natural and Physical Sciences	21951	22860	4.1%
02 Information Technology	5,624	5,491	-2.4%
03 Engineering and Related Technologies	14,554	14,779	1.5%
04 Architecture and Building	6,181	5,718	-7.5%
05 Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	3,883	4,288	10.4%
06 Health	41,341	42,040	1.7%
07 Education	17,454	17,420	-0.2%
08 Management and Commerce	28,994	28,963	-0.1%
09 Society and Culture	45,176	46,059	2.0%
10 Creative Arts	17,742	17,679	-0.4%
Total	204,836	207,094	1.1%

c – the data in the table do not add to the totals as the Fields of Education of 11 Food Hospitality and Personal Services; and 12 Mixed Field Programs have been excluded