

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio  
Budget Estimates Hearing 2008-09  
2-3 June 2008

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**AGENCY/DEPARTMENT:** INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

**TOPIC:** Doctorates

**REFERENCE:** Question on Notice (Hansard, 2 June 2008, Page E46)

**QUESTION No.** BI-88

**Senator ABETZ**—I would like to move to the Commercial Ready Program. Whilst officials are coming to the table I would like to follow on from Senator Eggleston's question. If you can, please take it on notice whether the comparison between Australia and the United States is just a comparison of all those who claim to hold doctorates because, as I understand it, there are certain institutions from which one can obtain a doctorate and it, to be charitable, is less robust than it is in Australia. I just want to make sure that we have got a proper comparison.

**Senator Carr**—The figures that I have been quoting are OECD figures.

**Senator ABETZ**—Does the OECD take into account the difference in robustness or ease with which one can get a doctorate? If somebody knows the answer to that, that would be good, but take it on notice.

**ANSWER**

The OECD collects statistics provided by OECD member states relating to doctoral degrees (OECD classification ISCED 6), which are programs devoted to advanced study and original research that lead directly to the award of an advanced research qualification. ISCED 6 degrees are not solely based on course-work, and require the submission of a thesis or dissertation that is the product of original research and represents a significant contribution to knowledge.

Data collected by the OECD on doctoral degrees relates primarily to retention and enrolment rates by member state.