

**Economics Legislation Committee**  
**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio  
Budget Estimates Hearing 2012-13  
28 and 29 May 2012

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

**TOPIC:** Higher Education Standards Panel

**REFERENCE:** Question on Notice (Hansard, Monday 28 May 2012, page 49)

**QUESTION No.:** BI-24

**Senator RHIANNON:** Thank you. Minister, while you popped out I asked a question about the Higher Education Standards Panel. Why is there no staff representative on that panel?

**Senator Chris Evans:** I will take that on notice. I cannot recall. Obviously the panel has been appointed and the composition is known. I will take a question on notice as to what consideration was given to a staff representative at the time. I just do not recall.

**Senator RHIANNON:** But, Minister, were you not responsible? We have only two, four or five people on the panel. I understood that you are the person who signed off on it and had a large input into it. I would have thought that that could be provided to us now.

**Senator Chris Evans:** The membership?

**Senator RHIANNON:** No, I have the membership in front of me. I want to know why there is no staff representative.

**Senator Chris Evans:** The first issue is: as I have told you a couple of times today, that is not currently before us; it is TEQSA appearing before you at the moment. I am the minister at the table. I am happy to answer questions about the portfolio this afternoon. As I said to you, we appointed them. As I recall, they were not appointed as representatives of anybody. They were appointed on merit, not in any representative capacity. As to the question about whether we gave consideration to a staff representative, I said I would take that on notice. I do not recall. But it was not a question of people being appointed in any representative capacity.

**ANSWER**

The Higher Education Standards Panel is not a representative body, it is a panel of experts appointed by the Minister. The Chair and members have the appropriate knowledge and expertise required by the *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* and an understanding of issues facing higher education staff and students.