

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing 2012-13
17 October 2012

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

TOPIC: University enrolments

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator McKenzie

QUESTION No.: SI-67

- 1) Has the department conducted any research about the number of prospective university students that are lost from the system between application and enrolment?
Is there a disproportionately large group from rural and regional areas?
- 2) What is the government doing to encourage these students to continue on to enrolment?

ANSWER

- 1) The Department's university applications and offers data show that applicants from non-metropolitan areas who receive an offer from a university are less likely to accept this offer compared with applicants from metropolitan areas. In 2012, 62.9 per cent of applicants from non-metropolitan areas accepted their offer compared with 74.9 per cent of applicants from metropolitan areas.
- 2) As part of a \$265 million package, since 1 January 2012, Inner Regional students have been able to access independent Youth Allowance in the same way as Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote students.

The Government has also provided further support for eligible regional students, as they face additional barriers in accessing higher education and often have more limited access options. The Government has increased to \$2,000 both second and third year Relocation Scholarship payments for eligible regional university students required to live away from home. This represents a \$900 increase in Relocation Scholarship payments for each of those years.

Regional higher education Youth Allowance student numbers have increased by 42 per cent (11,506 students), compared to a national increase of 28 per cent (35,873 students) since the start of the reforms in April 2010 and August 2012.

These reforms are targeted at addressing financial hardships faced by regional students who are more likely to come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and are more likely to move away from home to study.