

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 2

Output Group: 2.1 – Funding for vocational education and training.

DEST Question No. E737_05

Senator Carr asked on 16 February 2005, EWRE Hansard page 110.

Question:

Has ANTA undertaken any studies on non-completion rates for indigenous students. In particular, what are the causes of non-completion, and if there are any research reports, what are the recommendations for future action.

Answer:

ANTA has provided the following response:

Completion rates of apprentices and trainees

ANTA-funded research into completion rates of apprentices and trainees and vocational education students in general has identified Indigenous background as a significant risk factor for non-completion.

ANTA has recently funded an action research study on '**Improving indigenous completion rates in mainstream TAFE**' through the National Council for Vocational Education Research (NCVER). The NCVER report was published in 2004. A copy is attached.

The research focused on identifying intra-institutional factors that had an impact on completions of Indigenous students. Those discovered included the role of Indigenous Studies Units, the effect of changing class location, community delivery, recruitment practices, teacher quality and others.

Factors increasing the risk of non-completion included:

- lack of integration of the Indigenous Studies Unit into the rest of the TAFE
- mainstreaming Indigenous students without adequate support
- lack of a dedicated classroom or learning space
- enrolment in undesired courses because of limited choice
- enrolment in courses without adequate background.

Factors positively impacting completion included:

- high quality teachers
- community delivery
- collaborative delivery to Indigenous students in mainstream courses.

The report recommends that TAFE institutes:

- carefully examine policies for unintended effects on the experience of Indigenous students in mainstream courses
- collect better internal data on the experience of Indigenous students in mainstream courses
- establish ways to monitor and improve the quality of the learning opportunities provided to Indigenous students in mainstream programs

- encourage effective inter-team, inter-unit and inter-department collaboration
- professionally develop staff to better respond to Indigenous students' requirements.