

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

**Outcome:** 2  
**Output Group:** 2.4 – Funding for Higher Education

#### DEST Question No. E741\_05

Senator Carr provided in writing.

#### Question:

The following comments are taken from the "higher education reforms" page of the website mxl.com:

#### **"What are the benefits of becoming a registered Higher Education Provider (HEP)?"**

For your organisation, there are many benefits to becoming a registered HEP and Offering FEE-HELP.

- You can attract a much wider range of students. Students who may not be able to afford your fees upfront can now study at your organisation
- Since you are now open to all students, your organisation will gain a competitive advantage over other colleges who rely on upfront fees
- Throughout the year, you will receive regular payments from DEST that cover fee amounts of all students during their enrolments. This means even cash flow
- You no longer have to wait until pre-determined periods before you can recognise fee revenue
- You will gain endorsement from the Australian Government, which provides credibility and lets you develop competitive academic advantages."

MXL Pty Ltd attended the information session organised in July 2004 by DEST for private providers wishing to become recognised for the purposes of FEE-HELP, and other purposes.

- a) does DEST concur that recognition of a provider as a "Higher Education Provider" as defined in HESA confers the "endorsement of the Australian Government" for that provider?
- b) what exactly is being "endorsed"?
- c) what quality assurance measures and mechanisms will the Australian Government put in place to ensure that the providers so "endorsed" meet appropriate standards and offer courses commensurate with those of public providers?

#### Answer:

##### *Private Providers*

a) & b) Approval as a non self-accrediting Higher Education Provider (HEP) under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* (HESA) does not confer 'endorsement' by the Australian Government. It attests that an organisation has met the requirements set out in the HESA for HEP approval.

c) HEPs must meet the quality and accountability requirements set out in the HESA. This includes the requirement to be accredited under the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes by an authorised accreditation authority, and a requirement to be audited by a quality auditing body specified in the Higher Education Provider Guidelines.