

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. E770_05

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

Can DEST confirm that, between 1999 and 2003, the number of commencing Indigenous students fell by 12%?

Answer:

Indigenous Students

Between 1999 and 2003 Indigenous commencements fell by 12.8%.

The data used to answer this question are from the National Higher Education Statistics collection, compiled by DEST with cooperation from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. In 2002 DEST moved to new definitions for total and commencing students in its collection. The new definition is based on a unique count of students enrolled in a twelve month period whereas the old methodology was a unique count of students at the 31 March census date.

This response uses the old definition data because it maintains a consistent time series between 1999 and 2003. It should be noted that data based on the old definition will not be the same as new definition data provided in some other publications such as the annual National Report to Parliament on Indigenous Education and Training.