

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2006-2007 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1, 2
Output Group: 1.2 Assistance for individuals including those with special needs
2.5 Assistance for post-school students including those with special needs

DEST Question No. E810_07

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

Recipients of student income support

Answer E365_07 provides details of trends in numbers of recipients of student income support from Abstudy, Austudy and Youth Allowance since 1999.

1. In almost all categories of students, there have been substantial declines in the number receiving this support. Can you explain the reasons for these declines in numbers?
2. Can you provide estimates of the savings in real terms generated by these reductions in assistance since 1999? (Provide dollar figures equating to the change in numbers of recipients between 1999 and 2006.)

Answer:

Recipients of student income support

1. The Department considers that the buoyant labour market and economic conditions have contributed to strong growth in personal and family incomes in recent years. These are probably the main reasons for declines in the number of students who are eligible for ABSTUDY, Austudy and Youth Allowance since 1999. In addition to its impact on personal and family incomes, the strong labour market in recent years has increased the range of options available to young people.
2. Income support for students programmes are demand driven. Actual expenditure is a reflection on the take-up as no eligible person is denied assistance. Therefore, no savings have been generated.