

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

### SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2003-2004 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

**Outcome:** 2

**Output Group:** 2.5 – Assistance for post school students including those with special needs

#### DEST Question No. E083\_04

Senator Carr asked on 5 June 2003

#### Question:

“A DEST officer has said that this measure [Learning Entitlement] is designed to prevent ‘perpetual students’ from studying degree after degree at taxpayer expense.

- a) How many commencing students in bachelor degree courses actually have another bachelor degree?
- b) Using DEST statistics, I have worked out that last year, the proportion in that category was only 7.8%. Is that correct?
- c) Given that many, if not most of them, will have a good reason for embarking on a second degree, do you think these numbers are unsupportable?
- d) How big a problem at all is the problem of ‘perpetual students’?”

#### Answer:

##### *Learning entitlement*

- a) In 2002, 13,575 students.
- b) The correct figure is 8.1%
- c)d) The influencing factors to cease open ended funding for individuals were broader than specific numbers of students undertaking multiple awards. The Government’s decision to limit Commonwealth support to individuals was in response to stakeholder concern that arose during the substantial community consultation undertaken as part of the Review of higher education, that Commonwealth funds for tertiary study be shared more equitably across the community.