

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2005-2006 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 2
Output Group: 2.4 – Funding for higher education

DEST Question No. E370_06

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

On p.9 of the report MUP lists four kinds of item recognised by DEST. It says books are recognised if they are “major works of scholarship”. Can you confirm that, according to your criteria, a book would not count as a “major work of scholarship” if it:

- Is a textbook;
- Is an anthology simply edited by the academic claiming it; or
- Is a subsequent edition (ie not a first edition of a work)?

Do you recall that, at the hearing of this Committee looking at relevant proposed amendments to the Higher Education Support Act held in Melbourne in August last year, I pointed out that this two-volume work was:

- A textbook;
- An anthology simply edited by the academic concerned; and
- A subsequent edition – from memory the fifth edition of the same work?

In other words, this work fails on ALL THREE counts from meeting the DEST criteria – when only one would have been enough.

a) Is that correct?

In fact, the author who works for MUP is a Dr A Marcus. He wasn't an editor of any of the four previous editions of the work. Another Dr Marcus was one of the editors – but not a Dr A Marcus.

b) Doesn't that indicate that the case for accepting this work as meeting the DEST criteria is a little thin?

Answer:

Melbourne University Private

HEPs exercise their own judgement in determining which research publications meet DEST's requirements for inclusion in publications counts. DEST does not assess or formally recognise the publications. Nor does DEST audit or check HEPs' publications counts. In DEST's experience, HEPs take considerable care to ensure that their publications counts are accurate.

DEST's research publication requirements are set out in the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) Specifications. The 2005 HERDC Specifications are available from http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/online_forms_services/documents/specs2005_pdf.htm.

The HERDC Specifications indicate that textbooks, anthologies and new editions are unlikely to meet the HERDC requirements.