

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2007-2008 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome 2 - HIGHER EDUCATION

DEST Question No. E139_08

Senator Stott Despoja provided in writing.

Question:

Is there potential for universities to ask for fewer Commonwealth supported places for high-demand courses, and instead replace them with full-fee places?

Answer:

Commonwealth Grant Scheme

From 2008, the Australian Government will allocate Commonwealth supported places to providers across seven funding clusters. Higher education providers may submit proposals to the Australian Government to shift Commonwealth supported places between funding clusters in response to changing student demand or institutional focus.

The number of Commonwealth supported places allocated to individual courses within a funding cluster is largely a matter for the provider. However, as indicated in the Senate on 15 June 2007, the Australian Government will be including additional conditions in providers' funding agreements including to require that details of any substantial movement in the balance between Commonwealth supported places and fee paying in an undergraduate course of study is published by the provider. A provider will need to seek the Australian Government's approval to offer an undergraduate course of study on a fee paying only basis where the provider has been allocated Commonwealth supported places in the relevant discipline cluster.