

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

Outcome: 3
Output Group: 3.3 – AEI Group

DEST Question No. E660_04

Senator Stott-Despoja asked on 17 November 2003.

Question:

Has the department investigated the likely impact of the recent International Education Student Visa Application Charge increase on the number of international student enrolments?

Answer:

International Education Student Visa Application Charge

The Department analysed the proportion of total first year costs of study represented by the increase in the student visa application charge. The increase represents on averaged 0.6% of the total first year costs. In the case where a student is enrolled in a 12 week ELICOS course (the shortest course registered on CRICOS that requires a student visa) the proportion is 1.9%. We concluded that given the strength of demand for Australian international education over the past decade the impact of the increase on international student numbers will be marginal.

The Department also had regard to historical trends. Although Australia has the highest student visa application charge in the world, there is no evidence that the size of the application charge has adversely affected the education export sector. On the contrary, there has been steady growth in the industry for some time now, with an average annual increase of around 10 per cent per year for the last ten years.

It is interesting to note that Australia's two largest competitors for international students, the United States and the United Kingdom have both recently revealed plans to significantly increase their student visa and related charges. These fee increases would make their student visa charges similar as those in Australia.