

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

Outcome: 1
Output Group: 1.1 – Funding for Schools

DEST Question No. E524_07

Senator Wong asked in November 2006, in writing

1. Please confirm whether the Department agrees that the MCEETYA figure on average per student costs in a secondary school is appropriate for estimating the recurrent resources for the senior secondary years (Years 11 and 12) in an ATC.
2. Does the answer to E289_07 imply that the Department thinks that the AGSRC secondary figure is more appropriate? If so, how will the Colleges meet liabilities for superannuation, recreation, sick, long service leave and other leave, depreciation and debt?
3. And if the Department prefers to use AGSRC figures as the point of comparison, will it use these figures rather than the MCEETYA accrual figures in any future comparison with the recurrent costs of government schools and advise the Minister accordingly?

Answer:

MCEETYA figure on average per student costs

1. The MCEETYA figure on average per student costs is an average national figure for secondary students in government schools in Australia. This is not useful for estimating resources for students in Australian Technical Colleges (ATCs). ATCs are senior secondary colleges that are specialist in their nature and deliver education through a variety of models that differ from standard schooling models. They deliver across three streams – academic, trade training and business enterprise. In addition, the trade training is at the Certificate III level, higher than the Certificate I and II offered in some schools. There are also costs related to securing employment placements and liaising with employers.
2. The answer to E289_07 indicated that AGSRC provides a firmer estimate, however the Australian Technical Colleges initiative is delivering education across three streams in a very different manner to standard schooling models. It is therefore not appropriate to make direct comparisons between the two figures.

ATCs have prepared operating budgets. Staffing costs including associated on-costs are a component of these budgets.
3. The Australian Technical Colleges initiative is a new delivery model for senior secondary education, delivering education across three streams – academic, trade training and business enterprise. Any comparison with per student funding for more standard schooling models is therefore of limited value.