

## EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

### SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

**Outcome:** 2

**Output Group:** 2.4 - Funding for Higher Education

#### DEST Question No. E642\_07

Senator Stephens provided in writing.

#### Question:

Changes have been made to the assessment of universities by four broad discipline groups:

- science, computing, engineering, architecture and agriculture;
- business, law and economics;
- humanities, arts and education; and
- health.

- a) Why have these change been made?
- b) What feedback did DEST receive on the assessment aspect of the LTPF for the 2006 funding?
- c) What feedback has DEST received about this change?
- d) Is the Minister going to further separate the discipline groups, e.g. anthropology, sociology, history, etc. under humanities?

#### Answer:

##### *Learning and Teaching Performance Fund*

- a) During the review of the 2006 fund process, consultations were held nationally. Universities argued that the survey data is subject to large variations across fields of study, and that aggregating the data removed opportunities to recognise excellence in particular areas of strength, or encourage specialisation in specific areas.

The fund's advisory group therefore recommended disaggregating the data by broad discipline area to take account of these concerns.

- b) The department issued a discussion paper in December 2005 which attracted 51 submissions. Consultations were held with the sector in all States and Territories in March/April 2006. A total of over 100 people from all universities attended.

A summary of the issues raised in the consultation process, as well as universities' submissions to the discussion paper, are available on the department's website at: [http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher\\_education/policy\\_issues\\_reviews/key\\_issues/learning\\_teaching/ltpf/2007ltpf.htm#Issues\\_raised\\_in\\_the\\_consultation\\_process](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/policy_issues_reviews/key_issues/learning_teaching/ltpf/2007ltpf.htm#Issues_raised_in_the_consultation_process)

The advisory group considered all feedback before making recommendations to the Minister on the 2007 fund process.

- c) Informal feedback about this change has been positive.
- d) It is not currently planned to have any further disaggregation as the data are not sufficiently robust at a lower level.