

## 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. E682\_07

Senator Stephens provided in writing.

#### Question:

On 7 September Minister Bishop announced that the Australian government will provide \$400,000 for a consortium of universities to develop a single agreed template for an Australian Diploma Supplement.

- a. Which universities will comprise the consortium of universities? The same who were involved in the 2002 pilot project?
- b. How will the \$400,000 funding be allocated?
- c. Is the consortium expected to choose a template from the 3 displayed on the DEST website?
- d. What is the department's expectation of the take-up rate of the diploma supplement at Australian universities?
- e. What issues will be addressed in the project?

#### Answer:

##### *Diploma Supplement*

- a) Expressions of interest were sought from consortia of universities interested in conducting the project. The request for expressions of interest did not outline the specific composition of the consortia but requested that consideration be paid to ensuring groupings are representative of the various types, sizes and locations of Australian higher education institutions. The successful consortium, announced on 9 January 2007, represents 14 universities led by the University of New England, the Australian National University and the University of Melbourne and also comprising:

Charles Sturt University  
Edith Cowan University  
Griffith University  
Queensland University of Technology  
Swinburne University of Technology  
The University of Newcastle  
The University of New South Wales  
The University of Sydney  
University of Canberra  
University of South Australia  
Victoria University

Both Queensland University of Technology and Swinburne University of Technology were involved in the 2002 pilot project.

- b) The funding will be allocated under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.
- c) The consortium will be expected to develop a template based on the outcomes of its research and consultations.

- d) During 2006, the department held consultations on the implications of and possible responses to the Bologna Process in Europe. There was strong support for an Australian diploma supplement indicating potential for widespread take-up by Australian universities.
- e) Issues to be addressed/examined by the project will include:
- progress to date on development and implementation of the diploma supplement within the European Higher Education Area. Become familiar with developments to date within Australia, in particular the findings of pilot projects funded by DEST in 2002 and 2005;
  - analysis of the documentation currently provided by each Australian university to its graduating students in terms of stated purpose, range, structure, complexity, format and timing of issue;
  - comparison of the characteristics of existing Australian documentation with the requirements of relevant international processes and those of other major higher education markets;
  - examination of documentation provided to graduating students from universities from a range of countries in the European Higher Education Area and identification of components which could be relevant and valuable for use in Australia;
  - scoping of the system requirements and security protections which would be needed to support the rollout of the agreed national template and preserve the integrity of the system;
  - consideration of implications of possible name changes from Australian Diploma Supplement to another title that may reflect more closely the Australian context;
  - identification of option(s) which meet the minimal requirements of international processes referred to above and which involve minimum additional workload for universities and build in flexibility to enable universities to report on additional matters as they consider appropriate; and
  - consultation with universities, employer bodies and other stakeholders on the option(s), in terms of proposed structure and content of an Australian Diploma supplement, the level of workload and costs involved and the likelihood that universities would choose to adopt the supplement on a voluntary basis.