

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

Outcome: 1 and 2

Output Group: 1.2 Assistance for individuals including those with special needs
2.5 Assistance for post-school students including those with special needs

DEST Question No. E707_07

Senator Wong provided in writing.

Question:

DEST Annual Report 2005-06 (p.95) details the number of full time students supported by the Youth Allowance and Austudy. Of the 150,230 full time tertiary students in receipt of Youth Allowance, 65,112 achieved independence through meeting the workforce participation requirements (43%). The number of students achieving the independent rate of Youth Allowance through workforce participation seems high at 43%.

- Is this higher than previous years? Is there a trend in this data?
- Can DEST provide the number of students, and as a percentage of the total recipients, who have achieved the independent rate of Youth Allowance through workforce participation for the last 5 years?
- Has DEST examined this issue in any greater detail? Is it explained by students working more whilst studying, meeting the workforce requirements by taking time off study, or other reasons?
- What is the age profile of the students who receive the independent rate? Is it higher for students in their second or third years at university (19 or 20)?

Answer:

Youth Allowance

- Please refer to the table in part (b) of the answer to this question. Please note that the data refers to point in time at mid-June each year and may differ slightly from point-in-time data at other dates.
- Data for previous years has been requested from Centrelink and is supplied here.

Date of extract	21-June-2002	20-June-2003	18-June-2004	17-June-2005	16-June-2006
All Youth Allowance (full-time students)	313,068	304,946	297,140	285,383	274,050
- Independent	103,186	104,812	104,203	101,806	96,515
- Workforce participation	64,579	66,783	68,197	68,328	66,372
Workforce participation independent as percentage of all YA-FTS	21%	22%	23%	24%	24%

The data in this table has been prepared for a point-in-time at a date in mid-June of each year and may differ slightly from point-in-time data at other dates, such as 30 June of the same year.

- c) DEST undertakes regular monitoring of transitions and pathways of school leavers. Evidence from administrative data shows that the number of Year 12 completers going straight from school to tertiary study has declined by five per cent between 2000 and 2004. Research suggests that some of those not taking up study in the first year after leaving school will do so after a gap of one or more years. The number of Year 12 completers commencing university after a gap year has increased from around 14,900 in 1997 to 18,100 in 2004, and as a proportion of Year 12 completers has increased from 8.8% to 9.2% over the period. Changing patterns in transition to tertiary study will influence the proportion of YA recipients claiming independent status through work force participation.
- d) The following table provides data on the age profile of full-time students in receipt of Youth Allowance with independent status, as at 16 June 2006.

Age	Youth Allowance (full-time students) with independent status
15	650
16	2,876
17	3,697
18	3,752
19	8,852
20	16,997
21	19,211
22	15,454
23	11,106
24	7,644
25+	6,276

Data are not available by year of study at university.