

Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace Relations

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012**

Outcome 3 - Tertiary, Skills, International and Indigenous Strategy

DEEWR Question No. EW0667_12

Senator Rhiannon provided in writing.

Question

Demand Driven funding

Have you done modelling or evaluated the impact that budget forward planning in this more volatile and unpredictable environment will have on permanent staff numbers at universities? What did it show?

Answer

The Department has undertaken some analysis of key factors likely to impact on the demand and supply of academics over the medium to longer term.

First, the Australian Government's ambition to increase the proportion of 25 to 34 year old Australians with a qualification at bachelor level or above to 40 per cent by 2025 will lead to a substantial expansion in student places increasing the demand for academics. Second, the ageing of the academic workforce will lead to an increase in the replacement demand for academics. Third, research shows that more academics arrive than depart Australia. Over the 15 years to 2008, Australia has benefited from a net increase of 8,200 academics. If historical trends in the net migration of academics were to continue this would lead to an increase the supply of academics.

Data on the number and age of academic staff sourced from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Higher Education Statistics Collection are not directly comparable with data on net migration of academics sourced from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship administrative data. Notwithstanding the lack of comparable data, the expansion of the higher education sector and increase in student places is likely to be the major factor that impacts on the demand and supply of academics over the medium to longer term.