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. EW0837_12

Senator Rhiannon asked on 20 October 2011, Hansard page 82

Question

Funding Agreements

Senator RHIANNON: Can you give us a list of where approval has to be sought?
Mr Warburton: I could give you copies of the condition in the funding agreement.
Senator RHIANNON: Thank you

Answer

The following are extracts from the 2009–2011 Commonwealth Grant Scheme funding agreement.

"Sustaining specialised and nationally significant courses

1. *Before Closing a Course to which this clause applies, the Provider must consult the Commonwealth and obtain the Commonwealth's approval for the closure.*

    1.1. *In this clause, 'Course' means a Course of Study, or a major within a Course of Study, designed to prepare a student for entry to a specific occupation or to provide a specialised skill.*

    1.2. *This clause applies only to Undergraduate Courses of Study, and Postgraduate Courses of Study in which at least 50 per cent of places are Commonwealth supported places.*

    1.3. *This clause does not apply to a Course for which the Provider has had an intake for less than four consecutive academic years.*

    1.4. *This clause applies to Courses in the following categories:*

        1.4.1. *Courses that prepare students for entry to any occupation that is experiencing a National Skill Shortage;*

        1.4.2. *Courses, the Closure of which would be likely to create a National Skill Shortage in an occupation because the Provider is a sole or dominant provider of the national skill base for that occupation;*

        1.4.3. *specialised Courses directed at the regional economy, the closure of which would be likely to create serious detriment to the Skills Base of a Regional Economy; and*

        1.4.4. *Courses for a Nationally Strategic Language*.*

1.5. *In making a decision regarding a Course Closure, the Commonwealth will:*

1.5.1. *seek to reach a mutually agreeable arrangement with the Provider regarding the Course Closure;*

1.5.2. *have regard to student demand for the Course, the financial viability of the Course and the justification provided for a proposed Course Closure by the Provider;*

1.5.3. *assist the Provider to explore options to retain the Course, including through cooperation with another provider or the movement of Commonwealth supported places to another provider; and*

1.5.4. *not unreasonably withhold approval for a Course Closure so as to place an unreasonable financial burden on the Provider or place the Provider in a financially unviable position in regard to the Provider's overall financial status."*

*"**Nationally Strategic Language'** means Arabic or Indonesian and any other language notified in writing by the Commonwealth"*

*"'**National Skill Shortage'** refers to the skill shortages listed on the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (Skilled) Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL), available at www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/skilled-occupations/occupations-in-demand.htm The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations' State and Territory Skills Shortages Lists, available at http://www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Publications/LabourMarketAnalysis/SkillShortages/StateandTerritorySkillShortagelists/ should also be consulted;"*

*"'**Skills Base of a Regional Economy'** will differ on a case by case basis. To help establish if Closing a Course is likely to create serious detriment to the Skills Base of a Regional Economy, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations' State and Territory Skills Shortages Lists, available at http://www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Publications/LabourMarketAnalysis/SkillShortages/StateandTerritorySkillShortagelists/ should be consulted;"*

Links listed above are as provided in the contracts, the information referred to can now be found at:

MODL: www.immi.gov.au/skilled/sol

Skills shortage:
http://www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/LMI/SkillShortages/Pages/SkillShortageLists.aspx

---