LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QToN No. 1

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMY AND GENDER AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY
Mr James Milligan MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),
Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

Inquiry into unpaid work
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
Hearing: 3 July 2024

Asked by Miss Laura Nuttall on 3 July 2024: [Professor Lincoln] took on notice the following question(s):

[Ref: Hansard Uncorrected Proof Transcript [3 July 2024] [PAGE 43]]

In relation to:

THE CHAIR: Do you have any further questions, Ms Noddle?

MISS NUTTALL: I am just grabbing my notes. Yes, regarding the Work Integrated Learning Support Scheme, do you track which courses the recipients are doing and do you know sort of which courses tend to be best represented and do you know whether they, say, correlate with how long the placement is?

Professor Lincoln: We would have that information. I could not say with confidence which ones attract the most applications. As a general principle, though, the longer the placement, the more difficulties students, of course. The flip side of that is the longer they are on placement, the more valuable they are to the placement side and the industry, because they have been there longer and they know how to work, they can actually be more productive and learn more in that environment. We are always balancing that one up a little bit. But I could find out if you were interested in which—if there any professional groups that needed to access that support more frequently? Is that what you are asking?

MISS NUTTALL: Yes, absolutely.

Professor Lincoln: Sure.

Professor Lincoln: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

[Insert answer to question taken on notice]

Demand for financial support for placement at University of Canberra

Analysis of the Work Integrated Learning Support Scheme applicants indicates that whilst applications are from many courses and professions, they are higher in allied health areas, particularly where placement requirements are longer in time and/or the availability of Canberra placements places is lower, leading to more students needing placements away from their homes.

The University of Canberra's financial support for placement program, provides funding for eligible students to access financial support to contribute toward the cost of unpaid placements of 75 hours or more. In Semester 1, 2024 we have approved **234 applications** across two main streams of funding. Stream 1 provides funds to any student (undergraduate or postgraduate, domestic or international) undertaking a placement outside of Canberra or more than 100km round trip from their residence. Stream 2 provides funds to domestic, undergraduate students from the following equity groups: from a low-income background; from a rural or regional area; from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background who are undertaking an unpaid placement in any location. The placement categories of support are as follows: Category A for 75 hours to 15 full placement days; Category B for 16- 25 days; Category C for 26-40 days; and Category D for 40+ days

In Semester 1, across both streams, we received the most applications from students in the disciplines of Medical Radiation Science (MRS)/Medical Imaging (MI) and Physiotherapy. This most likely reflects that vast majority of MRS/MI students need to undertake at least one, often more than one of their placements outside of Canberra, and that Physiotherapy students undertake 4-5 placements during their final year of study.

In Semester 1, across both streams, we received the most applications from students eligible for Category B (16-25 days) with 25-day placements being the most common length of placement.

In Semester 2 of 2023 the student cohorts with the highest numbers of approved applications were MRS/MI, Nursing and Physiotherapy. The addition of Nursing in Semester 2 likely reflects the placement calendar i.e. the timing of placements in the course.

The length of placement has financial implications for students through lost income, accommodation, travel and living costs, particularly when a placement is far from the student's residences. UC has a high proportion of non-school leaver students balancing studies with work and family responsibilities, leading to higher financial impact on their families from placements.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality

Signature: Michelle Lincoln Date: 12 July 2024

Name: Professor Michelle Lincoln