



TERTIARY EDUCATION

It is recommended that this Policy be read in conjunction with the Education Allowances Policy, other individual Portfolio Policies and associated ICPA Aust documents

POLICY

ICPA seeks to ensure that students from rural and remote areas have access to tertiary education options which will enable them to pursue the career path of their choice.

OBJECTIVES

1. The Federal Government introduce and maintain a tertiary access allowance as financial assistance for rural and remote students who must live away from home to access tertiary education.
2. Tertiary Access Payment (TAP) (2021) criteria be expanded to ensure that the needs of all rural and remote tertiary students are met
3. Commonwealth-supported places be available at universities for all qualifying applicants.
4. Services be available to assist students with specific learning needs undertaking tertiary study.
5. The Federal Government and education providers continue to assist rural and remote students by providing equity scholarships
6. Scholarships and bursaries be excluded from assessable income for the purpose of student income support.
7. Support payments and adjunct payments be appropriate and commensurate with the costs incurred by rural and remote students who have to live away from the family home to access a tertiary education.
8. Eligibility criteria for Youth Allowance
 - a. be exclusive of the assessment of family assets and family actual means for rural and remote students,
 - b. be responsive to exceptional circumstances and
 - c. takes into consideration the rural and remote students' unique disadvantage.
9. Parental Income threshold used to determine Youth Allowance eligibility and calculate payment, reflects the ability of the family to support rural and remote dependent student/s when having to relocate to access a tertiary education.
10. Rural and remote tertiary students, who must live away from home to access further education upon completion of secondary school and do not qualify for Youth Allowance as a dependent, be classified as independent for Youth Allowance purposes
11. Youth Allowance eligibility for independent rural and remote students be irrespective of Parental Income criteria.
12. Students in receipt of Youth Allowance as an independent due to family assessment based on



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entitlement to the Farm Household Allowance and due to assessment based on drought, fire, flood or other natural disaster impacts remain eligible for payments at that rate until the completion of their course.

13. The Federal Government annually reviews the following for students applying and in receipt of Youth Allowance:
 - a. the personal income limit,
 - b. the liquid asset limit and waiting period and
 - c. the student income bank limit.
14. Scholarships for relocation be made available to rural and remote students and all Youth Allowance recipients who need to relocate to access tertiary study
15. Financial assistance for travel for students who must live away from home to access further education be maintained and reflects the needs of rural and remote students.
16. The Federal Government departments dealing with student financial assistance ensure:
 - a. staff have adequate training and knowledge around allowances and assistance for rural and remote students,
 - b. wait times on student helplines are reasonable,
 - c. a service that is suitable for rural and remote families,
 - d. information on the website is clear, concise in respect to eligibility criteria, information and application details and
 - e. processing of financial assistance payments and debt repayments is timely
17. Teacher Education courses to:
 - a. offer a major study area in Rural and Remote Education
 - b. include units relating to supporting learning difficulties such as autism spectrum disorder and Dyslexia in the rural and remote education environment.
 - c. offer Certificate qualifications to assist geographically isolated distance education home tutors
 - d. make early childhood education qualifications more accessible for rural and remote students.
18. Financial assistance be available for tertiary students who must relocate to undertake compulsory practicums.
19. On-campus accommodation be available to cater for rural and remote students and that bursaries and scholarships offered by residential university colleges be subject to need
20. Students be able to choose their preferred mode of study when undertaking tertiary education.
21. Financial incentives be available for teachers and health professionals working with students in rural, remote and very remote areas
22. Australian Government HECS-HELP program:
 - a) waive HECS debt for teachers working in rural and remote schools for three years.
 - b) reduce HECS fees for education, allied health, medical/nursing students who undertake compulsory placement hours in rural and remote areas
 - c) change the timing of HELP-HECS debt indexation applied to repayments
23. The Federal Government and Services Australia ensure that the Youth Allowance online application



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process is accessible and reliable for rural and remote applicants, with alternative secure methods available where internet connectivity is limited.

24. Services Australia provide dedicated Tertiary Access Payment (TAP) call centre staff, similar to Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC), to support rural and remote applicants.
25. Centrelink Rent Assistance payments be increased to reflect the rising cost of rent for rural and remote students who must live away from home to access tertiary education.
26. A rural and remote rent assistance program be established, independent of parental income, to support full-time university students.
27. The Commonwealth Prac Payment be extended to students undertaking mandatory practicums in medicine, veterinary science, and allied health degrees in rural and remote areas.
28. Students undertaking a Graduate Diploma in Education be eligible for the Commonwealth Prac Payment.
29. Experience gained as a Home Tutor delivering the school curriculum in rural and remote areas be recognised as prior learning (RPL) towards teacher aide and teaching qualifications.
30. An Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) allowance be made available for rural and remote university students studying from home to establish dedicated study spaces with essential technology and resources.
31. Universities offer Agricultural teaching pathways for secondary teaching students.
32. Universities promote elective subjects that enable teaching students to specialise as Agricultural teachers.
33. The High Achieving Teachers (HAT) Program include agricultural degree graduates to increase the supply of qualified Agricultural teachers.
34. The Federal Government provide funding for the AgCareerStart program and similar initiatives that support rural and remote students in pursuing careers in food, fibre, and related industries.