



EDUCATION ALLOWANCES

POLICY

ICPA seeks equity of access to an appropriate education for rural and remote students by ensuring the provision of suitable government allowances which assist with compensating the families of these students for the additional costs incurred in educating their children.

OBJECTIVES

1. All components of the current Federal Government funded Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme be continued.
The components of AIC are:
 - a. a non-means tested distance education allowance for students who do not have reasonable daily access to a government school and are studying primary or secondary education by distance education.
 - b. a non-means tested basic boarding allowance for students who do not have reasonable daily access to a government school and must live away from home to access an education.
 - c. an additional boarding allowance, based on a parental income test, for students living away from home to access an education.
 - d. a non-means tested second home allowance, equivalent to the basic boarding allowance, for families who establish a second home to access an appropriate education for their children.
2. Assistance for Isolated Children allowance be:
 - a. reviewed annually.
 - b. increased annually by at least the CPI Education sub index.
 - c. exempt from income tax.
3. Access to the AIC allowance for students in rural and remote areas who need to live away from home to attend a school which provides a curriculum or specialised program appropriate to the student's needs.
4. AIC allowance be available for all pre-compulsory school students enrolled in a recognised early childhood distance education program.
5. Geographically isolated distance education students be categorised separately within the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme.
6. Fares Allowance be added to the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme.



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7. The Federal Government establish a fund to assist students living in rural and remote areas with the cost of accessing an education in times of rural hardship.
8. The Federal Government introduce a tertiary access allowance as financial assistance for rural and remote students who must live away from home to access tertiary education.
9. Scholarships and bursaries be excluded from assessable income for the purpose of student income support.
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 dependent Youth Allowance, be classified as independent for Youth Allowance purposes.
11. Students in receipt of Youth Allowance at the independent rate due to family assessment based on successful 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.
12. Eligibility criteria for Youth Allowance be exclusive of the assessment of family assets and family actual means for rural and remote students.
13. The Federal Government annually reviews the following for students applying and in receipt of the away from home rate of Youth Allowance:
 - a. the personal income limit,
 - b. the liquid asset limit and
 - c. the student income bank limit.
14. Parental Income threshold used to determine dependent Youth Allowance eligibility and calculate payment, reflect the ability of the family to support rural and remote dependent student/s when having to relocate to access a tertiary education.
15. Independent Youth Allowance eligibility for rural and remote students be irrespective of Parental Income criteria.
16. Relocation scholarships be made available to rural and remote students and independent Youth Allowance recipients who need to relocate to access tertiary study.



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17. Financial assistance be available for tertiary students who must relocate to undertake compulsory practicums.
18. 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.
19. A Living Away from Home Allowance (LAFHA) be available for apprentices and trainees who are required to move and live away from their family home to access components of their qualification.
20. The LAFHA for apprentices and trainees closely reflects the actual cost of living away from home.
21. The LAFHA for apprentices and trainees' eligibility period post-school, be longer than 36 months for rural and remote school-based apprentices who transfer, at the completion of secondary schooling, to full-time employment with the same apprenticeship.
22. Travel and accommodation allowances be paid to apprentices and trainees when required to travel to access a training provider.
23. Relocation assistance be available for rural and remote apprentices and trainees who need to relocate away from their family home to pursue their qualification.