



Youth Allowance

FACTSHEET 7

STUDENT INCOME SUPPORT—MASTERS BY COURSEWORK PROGRAMS

The Australian Government proposes to extend income support provided through Youth Allowance and Austudy to students enrolled in all Masters by coursework programs. Other eligibility requirements would remain the same as for students enrolled in lower level courses.

Subject to the passage of the enabling legislation, from 1 January 2012, the measure will benefit approximately 6252 masters by coursework students in 2012–13.

This proposed measure was costed at \$72.7 million over two years.

Benefits

This proposed measure would aim to provide more equitable access to student income support and recognises the value of masters-level study for students from low-income backgrounds. Masters qualifications are increasingly required for entry to professional level employment.

The measure would help to boost overall skill levels in Australia by encouraging people to undertake masters by coursework degrees, including those degrees required for professional entry.

This initiative is part of the proposed reforms to the student income support system which aim to ensure that financial barriers to the participation of students from low socio-economic backgrounds are removed. It would enable these students to complete masters qualifications, increasingly required for entry to the workforce. Students would also be able to take advantage of restructured university course arrangements, a process which is accelerating in the higher education sector.

Students undertaking all Masters by coursework degrees would be able to test their eligibility for student income support.

This proposed measure would apply to students who are otherwise eligible for income support provided through Youth Allowance and Austudy.

Next steps

While legislation to give effect to the proposed reforms has already passed the House of Representatives, the Senate has not passed the legislation. The Government has indicated that it intends to again seek passage of the reforms by the Senate in early 2010. Commencement dates are subject to the passage of the legislation.