



# More opportunities for regional students: improved Fares Allowance

## Overview

The Australian Government will improve arrangements for Fares Allowance from 2021.

The changes to Fares Allowance will mean that eligible students who receive Youth Allowance, Austudy or Pensioner Education Supplement will be able to access Fares Allowance for the mid-year break in their first year of study.

The National Regional, Rural and Remote Tertiary Education Strategy report (Naphthine Review) found that transport costs can be a major issue for students who relocate to study. Given that around 70 per cent of students from regional and remote areas who undertake tertiary study relocate to do so, a modified Fares Allowance would provide important support for these students to assist them in staying connected with their family and community at appropriate points throughout the year.

The improvements to Fares Allowance support the Government's broader agenda to strengthen tertiary education in regional and remote Australia, and respond to Recommendation 2, Action 11 of the Naphthine Review.

## Frequently asked questions

### What is Fares Allowance?

Fares Allowance is a payment currently available through Services Australia to assist students to travel between their permanent home address and their place of tertiary study. More details are available at [www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/Centrelink/fares-allowance](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/Centrelink/fares-allowance).

### What do the changes mean?

Currently, students must be receiving Youth Allowance, Austudy or the Pensioner Education Supplement (PES) for six months before they can access a return trip home under Fares Allowance during their first year of study.

This change will reduce the waiting period from six months to three months, to allow students to travel home in the mid-year break in their first year. All other aspects of Fares Allowance and the eligibility criteria will remain the same.

Changes will commence from 1 January 2021, to benefit students who begin receiving Youth Allowance, Austudy or PES for the 2021 academic year.

## **Who is eligible for funding and how can I apply?**

Please refer to the Services Australia website for all details on eligibility for Fares Allowance and how to apply at [www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/Centrelink/fares-allowance](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/Centrelink/fares-allowance).