Youth allowance changes

As from July 1st, more than 315,000 students who receive Youth Allowance or Austudy will be able to earn more from part-time and casual work without it affecting their payments.

Changes to the student income support system mean students will be able to earn $400 a fortnight, up from the current threshold of $236 per fortnight, before there is any impact on their student payments.

Senator Chris Evans, the Minister for Tertiary Education, said the Australian Government is making it easier for students to supplement their income support payment with earnings from part-time or casual employment.

"We know living costs can be a barrier for students, and this change to the income threshold will allow students to earn more each week before their payments are reduced," Senator Evans said.

"After years of decline under the Howard Government, we are proud to see the number of students attending university once again on the increase. Having more students with the qualifications they need for tomorrow’s jobs will be of huge benefit to regional businesses, industry and the economy."

The Parliamentary Secretary for Higher Education and Skills, Sharon Bird, said in addition, the Gillard Government is raising the Student Income Bank from $6000 to $10000. The Student Income Bank is a way for students to ‘bank’ any unused part of their fortnightly personal income threshold to be used at a later stage.

"The accumulated credit can be used to offset higher income earned in other fortnights, for example, if students increase their work hours during university holidays," Ms Bird said. "Tomorrow’s changes will mean students will be better supported to manage their ongoing study and living costs."

To maintain the real value of these changes, both measures will, for the first time, be indexed annually to the Consumer Price Index.

The Government is also delivering extra assistance to students through the Household Assistance Package. Payments of up to $190 for eligible students were made ahead of the introduction of the carbon price.

Student income support recipients will also receive the twice-yearly Supplementary Allowance of a total $210 for single people and $175 for a member of a couple.

These changes come on top of the Government’s earlier reforms which have boosted the number of higher education students receiving Youth Allowance by 21 per cent.

The Youth Allowance reforms have given more students access to income support and contributed to the rise in the number of students enrolling at university by breaking down the financial barriers to education.
Students to benefit from Youth Allowance changes

More than 315,000 students who receive Youth Allowance or Austudy will be able to earn more from part-time and casual work without impacting on their payments, thanks to Gillard Government changes coming into effect this week.

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