

Student Assistance Schemes Policy

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Document details

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Change history

Version	Date	Author	Changes made
1.2	November 2019	Finance Engagement Policy and Strategy	Updated definitions for Austudy and Youth Allowance
1.1	October 2019	Finance Engagement Policy and Strategy	Transfer of document to web compatible template. Amended document layout and wording for improved readability, no changes to policy intent.
1	1 May 2018	Elise Dungey	Policy developed based on Student Assistance Schemes handbook.

Related policy, legislation and documents

Departmental	Student Assistance Schemes Guidelines and Procedures
Northern Territory	Education Act 2015 Education Regulations 2015 Public Sector Employment and Management Act 1993 Public Sector Employment and Management Regulations 2011
Other	Australian Bureau of Statistics, Consumer Price Index

1. Policy

The Department of Education (the department) is committed to ensuring that all children residing in the Northern Territory have choice and access to educational facilities and are not disadvantaged by distance or isolation.

The Student Assistance Schemes are a Northern Territory Government initiative aimed at helping families whose children need to travel considerable distances to attend school each day, live away from home to attend school, college or university or access distance education.

The department is responsible for administering the Student Assistance Schemes including assessment of applications, processing claims and making payments to approved applicants. Each scheme or allowance has different eligibility criteria which are outlined in the Student Assistance Schemes guidelines and procedures.

This document should be read in conjunction with the [Student Assistance Schemes guidelines and procedures](#).

2. Business need

The Student Assistance Schemes policy and its associated guidelines and procedures have been developed to provide clear information to stakeholders on the financial support available to families and how to access that support under the schemes. The policy and guidelines outline the eligibility criteria, assessment conditions and due dates for each scheme and stakeholder responsibilities.

3. Scope

This policy supports eligible students residing in the Northern Territory to access educational facilities by providing a range of schemes and allowances which are outlined below.

Boarding

These schemes/allowances are available for students who must live away from home to attend school in the Northern Territory or interstate:

Within the Northern Territory

- isolated students education allowance for boarding institutions
- mid-term travel scheme
- student travel scheme
- supplementary boarding allowance.

Interstate

- interstate boarding allowance
- remote area travel allowance.

Daily transport to and from school

This scheme is available to help with daily transport for students to and from school:

- conveyance subsidy scheme.

Distance education

These schemes/allowances are available to students who attend a school of the air, Northern Territory School of Distance Education or other distance education:

- correspondence site allowance
- correspondence site allowance – preschool
- correspondence materials delivery assistance scheme
- schools of the air student functions allowance.

University or higher education

These schemes are available to students who attend university or higher education away from home in the NT or interstate:

- tertiary fares reimbursement scheme – interstate
- tertiary fares reimbursement scheme – Northern Territory.

4. Definitions

ABSTUDY: the Australian Government's Aboriginal Study Assistance Scheme ([ABSTUDY](#)).

Academic progress: the academic results achieved by a student which is sufficient for the enrolled course to be completed within the prescribed course duration.

Applicant: a parent including a child's father, mother or any other person who has parental responsibility for the child, including a person who is regarded as a parent of the child under Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander customary law or tradition. Applicant may also be an independent student.

Approved School of the Air function: a function organised by a Northern Territory (NT) distance learning facility for students attending that school. These facilities include [Alice Springs School of the Air](#), [Katherine School of the Air](#) and [NT School of Distance Education](#).

Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme: The Australian Government's [Assistance Scheme](#) for parents and carers of children who can't go to a local government school because of geographical isolation, disability or special needs.

Austudy: the Australian Government's Australian Study Assistance Scheme for students aged 25 years or older ([Austudy](#)).

Boarding school / facility: a student accommodation facility, formally managed by the school, for full time students who need to live away from home during the school term in order to attend a primary, middle or senior school. The boarding facility provides specific services to support students including homework supervision and recreational and social development.

Charter flight: a flight by an aircraft chartered for a specific journey, not part of an airline's regular schedule.

Claim period: usually the school year but can be for part thereof.

Considerable distances: any distance in excess of 5km.

Department: the Department of Education.

Dependent student: a student 21 years of age or younger who is not considered independent (see definition of independent student below). This means the parent's income affects the eligibility of the Youth Allowance.

Distance education: schools offering an alternative to students who cannot attend a government school in person.

Eligible students: a student that meets all conditions of a scheme to which they are making an application or claim.

Exceptional circumstance: refer to unforeseen circumstances that were outside of the applicant's control.

Half Semester: refers to Term 1 or Term 3 of the same year.

Independent student: Generally, for NT Department of Education policy purposes, an independent student is defined as "a child is living independently if the child is of or above the age of 14 years and not living with a parent." However, for the purpose of this document, that definition excludes full time students who have to live away from home to attend school.

Interstate boarding allowance unit: the amount per year reimbursed under the interstate boarding allowance scheme, expressed as a unit. [Refer to Student Assistance Schemes Guidelines and Procedures - Appendix 1.](#)

Isolated students education allowance unit: the amount per year reimbursed under the isolated students education allowance, expressed as a unit. The unit is updated by the department annually based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics December Consumer Price Index. Refer to [Student Assistance Schemes Guidelines and Procedures - Appendix 1.](#)

Most direct and economical fare: the lowest cost fare available that meets the traveler's needs, including personal safety, to convey a student or applicant directly to and from home to school/nearest point of access to public transport/centre.

Nearest centre from which interstate transport is available: refers to the nearest airport or bus depot, where interstate travel is available. In some instances, the most economical route may be to an interstate centre such as Kununurra or Mt Isa.

Non-salaried student: a student who is not in receipt of an income (salary or wage) on a full time basis. The Fair Work Ombudsman defines a full time employee as one who:

- "usually works, on average, 38 hours each week
- is a permanent employee or on a fixed-term contract

The actual hours of work for an employee in a particular job or industry are agreed between the employer and the employee and/or set by an award or registered agreement."

Priority field of study: the list of skilled occupations that are in high demand or considered critical by business and industry in the NT. The [NT High Priority Occupations List](#) is produced annually by the Department of Trade, Business and Innovation.

Regular passenger flight: airlines that carry fare-paying passengers at regular intervals according to a publicised route and timetable.

Return trip: the trip taken by the student, and where applicable the applicant, for the sole purpose of transporting the student from home to school and back home again. A trip may include a combination of vehicle (private car or bus) and regular passenger flight or charter flight.

Where a student is transported by the applicant, the trip undertaken by the applicant is included in the student's return trip. For example, one return trip for the student includes:

- applicant drops off student and then returns home, and
- applicant collects student and then applicant and student return home.

Second home: a home maintained by the family for the purpose of providing daily access to appropriate education for at least one dependent student who would not normally have such access from the principal family home.

Semester: in relation to a year, means two consecutive terms in the same half of the year. i.e. Terms 1 and 2 make up Semester 1, and Terms 3 and 4 make up Semester 2.

Student: a child enrolled and attending an approved educational facility on a full time basis.

Student conveyance allowance unit: the amount per kilometre reimbursed under the student assistance schemes conveyance allowance, expressed as a unit. The unit is based on the Northern Territory *Public Sector Employment and Management Act* (PSEMA) with reference to section 13(a) Government Vehicle Allowance (By-law 32) and is determined by the Commissioner for Public Employment annually. Refer to [Student Assistance Schemes Guidelines and Procedures](#) - Appendix 1.

Student correspondence site allowance unit: the amount per year reimbursed under the student correspondence site allowance, expressed as a unit. The unit is updated by the department annually based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics December Consumer Price Index. Refer to [Student Assistance Schemes Guidelines and Procedures](#) - Appendix 1.

Student correspondence site allowance – preschool unit: the amount per year reimbursed under the student correspondence site allowance – preschool, expressed as a unit. The unit value is based on 50% of the student correspondence site allowance unit. Refer to [Student Assistance Schemes Guidelines and Procedures](#) - Appendix 1.

Student supplementary boarding allowance unit: the amount per year reimbursed under the student supplementary boarding allowance, expressed as a unit. Refer to [Student Assistance Schemes Guidelines and Procedures](#) - Appendix 1.

Tertiary authorising officer: the tertiary institution's representative with authority to confirm student enrolment.

Youth Allowance: [Australian Government's](#) Student Assistance Scheme for students aged 24 years of age or younger (students are able to continue to receive Youth Allowance after turning 25 for the duration of the course of full time study or apprenticeship they were undertaking before turning 25).