

My name is Emily Carmichael, and I am a 2009 gap year university student. Recent changes to youth allowance have deemed me ineligible for relocation scholarships on the account of my 'independent' status. In order to achieve my independence and be eligible for youth allowance I took a year off study and worked 36 hours per week, then was required to move two hours from my hometown, Busselton, to attend university.

Previously a commonwealth scholarship was available to students such as myself, however Julia Gillard as education minister of the time robbed us of this opportunity and offered a 'relocation' scholarship in its place, promising us gap year students that we would not miss out, which is quite obviously not the case.

The fact that the new laws do not class my situation as eligible for relocation is ridiculous, especially since dependant students still living at home have gained eligibility for this benefit. As a result students such as myself have been further financially disadvantaged.

Finding full time work for 12 months was difficult in itself, if the government changes these requirements to 18 months it will be robbing many country students the opportunity of gaining a higher education, as many may lose their place in university due to deferral restrictions.