

Youth Allowance Submission – the REAL world from a parent. 24-9-2009

There has been a lot of talk about changes to Youth Allowance and I am pleased to hear that current gap year students will not be affected.

However what does the future hold. I have a second daughter who is currently in year 11.

This submission is to highlight points relating to country students having to move to the city to study.

In our case it is our eldest daughter who is currently in 1st year at the University of Western Australia studying Medicine:

1. Real costs to start the year.
2. Accommodation options
3. Part time work
4. Health
5. Security
6. Transport.

Our daughter (Emma) is living at Trinity College at UWA, why?

Emma was very nervous about living in the city, the workload for Medicine is immense, and there is no car parking for 1st years at UWA

So we looked at all the options such as renting privately, staying with an aunt, and college.

We chose College accommodation for the following reasons:

1. Close to UWA ie walk to uni so transport not an issue.
2. Meals provided so she did not have to cook and shop
3. Security provided by peers and staff at Trinity

But what is the cost. I have copied Trinity's schedule of fees below.

You will see that the initial fees at the beginning of the year are \$886 plus if you are a 1st year there is an additional \$365 – so in 1st year it is \$1251.

Then there is weekly board of \$320/week for 2x17week semesters (this is increasing by \$38/week in 2010)

So total annual fees of \$11,766 plus orientation week for 1st years of \$365.

If they want to park a car at Trinity after 1st year then it is \$110 pa.

Virtually all of the lectures rely to some degree or totally rely on ready access to the internet. PCs are available in the Trinity resource centre but limited number. Also your pc needs to be mobile for return home for weekend breaks or study week breaks at home. So a quality laptop is needed around \$1300

First year Medicine booklist is around \$1000 worth of books.

There are other expenses related to studying Medicine that are not relevant in broad terms of a country student studying in the city.

So what are the other issues.

Relying on public transport is one. Buses and trains usually suffice but at other times due to location of destination or hour of day a taxi is required for access or just safe travel for a young girl in the city by herself. So this is an additional expense.

Health – your child rings you unsure if she has swine flu (had multiple recent contacts) you then have to comfort from remote location and advise what to do but then she has to deal with it by herself. If necessary travel to Perth to check on her.

The final point regarding moving to the city is part time work to support yourself. For Medicine, the Faculty head actually strongly recommended that Medicine students NOT work during the Academic year due to the huge workload they have.

So then a student can try and find part time work in the holiday periods – when every other YOUNGER (thus cheaper) person is also looking for work. Also in regional areas there are very limited opportunities for such employment.

If you compare the above with that of a city based student able to live at home – well there is no comparison.

Not only is the financial burden for country students vastly greater but they are also dealing with the huge rent emotionally of leaving their family and everything they have known.

The proposal to have gap year students work 18 months is outrageous. Already these students have put on hold their career and future for one year to enable them to finance their move to the city.

For many courses there is not a mid year intake so that delay would be two years.

In my daughter's case her future is:

- 6 years study
- 1 year internship
- 2 years residency to gain a registrar position
- 4-5 years to specialize

So already 13-14 years plus gap year of 1 possibly 2 years – then she can start to pay off her \$52000+ HECS debt!

Because of the above she considered a 4 year Science degree but she is so passionate about Medicine that would have been a bad choice.

We are very proud of our daughter and the huge commitment she has made, but does that mean I have to provide everything for her for the next 6 years.

Fortunately she comes under the current rules so we are ok – just. However our other daughter may head down the same path and with the proposed changes I don't know that we can do that as well.

The rural and regional areas are crying out for doctors and yet it seems the Federal government is intent on making it as hard as possible for country students to go to University by providing inadequate support and recognition of what it takes to move from the country to the city. Why should country students have less opportunity than city students? It is important that the Federal Government recognize that the issue of opportunity to attend tertiary education should be equal whether you live in the city or the country. If that means more funding for rural based students than their city counterparts then so be it.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Jones



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Uniting Church in Australia at The
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2009 Schedule of Fees All charges include GST

Compulsory College Fees

Fee Type/comments		Full Year	One Semester Only
Application Fee	A non-refundable fee common to all colleges:		
	Local Applicants	\$50	\$50
	Overseas and Interstate	\$60	\$60
Contingency Fee	Payable by all new residents. Fee is refundable after completion of Contract, subject to there being no outstanding debts	\$320	\$320
Building Improvements Levy		\$220	\$110
Full Weekly Board – Standard Room *	Includes 21 meals per week \$5440 per 17-week semester	\$320	\$320
Computer Network Support and Internet Access		\$160	\$ 80
College Year Book		\$ 35	\$ 35

College Club Fee	Collected on behalf of the Trinity Residents' Club	\$136	\$85
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Orientation Week Fees for New residents only – 15/02/2009 to 20/02/2009 inclusive

Orientation Week accommodation/ catering	New residents only	\$275	\$275
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Residents' Club Orientation Week Fee	New residents only	\$ 90	\$ 90
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Other Fees and Charges

Parking Fee	Per vehicle per year/semester. A limited number of parking spaces are available. Allocations are at the discretion of the Head of College	\$110	\$55
	Per scooter/motor bike. Allocations are at the discretion of the Head of College	\$50	\$25
Rekeying charge	Only where the room key has been lost	\$125	\$125

NOTE: Fees include GST where applicable.

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