




THE HON JULIA GILLARD MP
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Mrs Julia Irwin MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

03 SEP 2008


Dear Mrs Irwin

Thank you for your letter of 25 June 2008 concerning a petition submitted for the Committee's consideration regarding approval of the Doctor of Physiotherapy course at Bond University for the purposes of student income support, such as Youth Allowance and Austudy. I apologise for the delay in responding.

From 1 January 2008, Youth Allowance and Austudy assistance was extended to students undertaking Masters by coursework study, where the course is required for entry to a profession, or the course is the fastest pathway to professional entry, or the course is the only pathway provided following a university's restructure of its course delivery. I have the authority to approve courses for the purposes of student income support and approved courses are listed in a Determination of Education Institutions and Courses under subsections 3(1) and 5D(1) of the *Student Assistance Act 1973* (Determination No 2007/1).

The extension of student income support to professionally oriented coursework Masters programs does not extend to coursework Doctorates. The level at which courses are offered is a matter for university decision, taking into account their own course structures and the range of assistance that is available for students.

Yours sincerely

Julia Gillard
Minister for Education