

Hello Senator,

I contacted your office in Adelaide last week to talk about issues relating to the Youth Allowance.

I was told about the current enquiry into Student Income Support, and it was suggested that i email you with our experience and concerns.

Our son Samuel successfully completed first year Aquaculture at Flinders Uni. last year, but then decided he wanted to change courses.

He's now left home and is living in Launceston Tasmania, and attending the Australian Maritime College where he was accepted for Naval Architecture.

We are funding a shared house there with two other students and his day to day living expenses. (It would have been even more expensive taking a room at the College where they are asking \$180/week.)

During his year at Flinders Sam worked most nights at the Red Rock Noodle Bar and the idea was that he'd get a part time job in Launceston ASAP.

Despite a concerted effort, he has been unable to find work yet in Tasmania, where youth unemployment i understand is higher than in Adelaide. He has a fairly decent CV for a young man having worked during his holidays as a farm/vineyard hand since his early teens, as well as supermarket stocking, and of course last year at the Red Rock Noodle Bar.

His aim in Launceston was to qualify for the Youth Allowance, which both the other young men he's sharing with receive, having deferred their first year at University to work full time. The situation is proving quite frustrating for Sam and he faces the potential prospect of deferring his second year at Maritime College. (although we would be aiming to continue supporting him sufficiently, to prevent that.)

Sam is nearly 20 years old and while he made a very adult decision to switch courses and move to Tassie, he continues to rely on us...his family.. entirely for financial support.

My partner and i both work as pay-as-you-earn employees and our up-front income disqualifies us from receiving any government assistance despite the fact that the course he's now doing required him to leave South Australia and the comforts of home.

I assume there must be many people in similar circumstances but i hope our situation is helpful regarding your submissions to the Student Income Support enquiry.

PS: I'm glad to say Sam has just managed to find work in a petrol/convenience store in Launceston and seems keen to work enough to qualify as soon as possible for the Youth Allowance. This job does however involve him working from 2100 hrs to 0700...so it's a pretty tough assignment for a full time student.

We hope this is a useful outline for you.

Regards Peter and Julienne Muirhead