

Submission

to

Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education
References Committee

Inquiry into student income support

Submission no: 108

Received: 25/06/2004

Submitter: Mr Andrew Ward

Organisation:

Address: WAGGA WAGGA NSW 2650

Phone:

Fax:

Email: sboxwe01@postoffice.csu.edu.au



To whom it may concern.

I am Andrew Maxwell Ward of Wagga Wagga. I attend Charles Sturt University. I am currently enrolled in the course of Bachelor of Science, Agriculture Science majoring in Agronomy. I have been a full time student for the past four years and a part time student for the past six months. Over the past four years my financial situation has changed dramatically. I came to University with no financial assistance from any government organisation over the past four years. The only monetary means I had was a trust fund that I recieved when I turned 18 due to my fathers untimely death when I was 13. If this ghad not been the case then I would not have attended University at all. During the past four years I have had financial assistance from my Mother in the form of \$140.00/fortnight which as one can imagine does not even cover the basic necessities in that fortnight. Due to my stepfather earning around \$2000 over the threshold for youth allowance I was never elligible. I worked most of my holidays but due to seasonal work and the current drought I was never able to earn over the independance bracket in the 4 month period per year that I could work. I made my decision this year in order to survive that I would change from internal to a distance education student, instead of applying for any form of student or related benefits, I applied for newstart which under centrelink obligations requires me to look full time for work. I am currently doing so aswell as doing two subjects per semester, thus elongating my degree by double the normal amount of time. I am currently unemployed as thier has been no job oppurtunities in the Wagga Wagga area. I am still only barley scraping through per fortnight. To gurantee my survival I am considering an absence of leave from University studies to spend more time looking for work. If this does not happen then I am dropping down to one subject per semester till I can save the required funds to continue my study. I havent been able to afford text books this year at all, also travel funds to and from Univesity have limited my access considerably. With the current governments stance on education if the fees increase at all I may have to consider tabling my degree indefinitely as I would not be able to afford a tertiary education. In the past four years of my time at CSU-Wagga I have spent well over \$50,000 on accomadation, travelling, text books, student fees, subject fees, printing and internet costs, field trips, food and other living and studying expenses. I don't wish my current situation upon anybody that has to undertake a degree it is sometimes mentally frustraing and stressful which also effects ones grades.

Please consider this plight of mine and may you make the right decision for tomorrows people of Australia. Your support today will ensure the survival of tomorrows leaders.

Yours Sincerely,

Andrew M Ward.
Student at CSU Wagga