

Submission to Rural and Regional Access to Secondary and Tertiary Education Opportunities

My daughter took a working gap year this year (she completed the HSC in NSW in 2008) in order to earn enough money to qualify for the Youth Allowance under the current specified guidelines/criteria – she is accepted to study at Wollongong Uni in 2010. However, the Government is proposing to legislate new guidelines in the 2009 budget which would take effect in January 2010. These new guidelines mean that my daughter would not qualify for the allowance at all, putting her study at Wollongong in doubt-she would have to work for another year to qualify. This is not fair to change the Youth Allowance qualifying guidelines retrospectively - if they are to be changed the commencement should be Jan 2011.

Also, many regional students would have to work substantial fulltime for 2 years from now on to qualify for the allowance – how realistic is this? Please block these changes as they reduce choice/options for potential tertiary students,