

As parents of two rural students now attending university away from home, it is of concern to us that there are significant financial difficulties for families who choose to support their children when away at university.

Both our daughters attended a rural school (All Souls St Gabriels School in Charters Towers, Queensland) and matriculated to university. The eldest daughter is finishing a law degree and our youngest has just started secondary education. Both are studying at James Cook University in Townsville which is 135 kms away. Both students live on campus at a college at James Cook University. Neither of the students was considered for a scholarship or other form of financial assistance.

As parents, we pay the full cost of campus accommodation, travel, cost of living and the ancillary costs of education. We have not paid the HECS fees for our daughters, so each of them has to incur this debt. The cost this year for both students will be in the vicinity of \$50,000.

We would like the Committee to consider some form of financial assistance to families who incur these considerable costs.

Yours sincerely,

Denis & Margaret Riddle