



Department of
Education

STUDENT ALLOWANCES GUIDELINES 2023

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SECONDARY ASSISTANCE SCHEME

The State Government, through the Department of Education, provides financial support to eligible parents through the Secondary Assistance Scheme (SAS). The aim of this scheme is to assist low income families with secondary schooling costs.

SAS comprises of two allowances (as per table below):

- Education Program Allowance (EPA); and
- Clothing Allowance.

| | Education Program Allowance | Clothing Allowance |
|---|--|--|
| PUBLIC SCHOOLS | \$235 <i>payment to school</i> | \$115 <i>payment to parent/guardian or school</i> |
| NON GOVERNMENT (PRIVATE) SCHOOLS | \$235 <i>payment to school</i> | \$115 <i>payment to parent/guardian</i> |
| HOME EDUCATION | \$235 <i>payment to parent/guardian</i> | \$115 <i>payment to parent/guardian</i> |
| ABSTUDY SUPPLEMENT ALLOWANCE | \$79 <i>payment to school</i> | - |

1.1 PARENT/GUARDIAN CONCESSION CARD DETAILS

A Parent/Guardian may apply for the Secondary Assistance Scheme if he or she holds one of the following cards:

- Services Australia (Centrelink) Pensioner Concession Card;
- Services Australia (Centrelink) Health Care Card; or
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card (blue card only, TPI and gold cards cannot be accepted as they are issued for medical benefit purposes only).

Cards must meet the following requirements:

- Valid for a period of no less than four weeks.
- Valid at the time of SAS application (cannot use an expired concession card to apply for SAS).
- Valid some time within Term 1 (1 February 2023 – 6 April 2023).
 - For overseas applicants applying throughout the year, the card must be current at the time of application. Application for the Secondary Assistance Scheme must be made within one month of enrolling at the school, or two months for extenuating circumstances (eg Centrelink processing Concession Card).
 - For interstate applicants, the card must be valid some time within Term 1.
- Students must be listed on parent/guardian concession card.
- Years 11 and 12 students will possibly not be listed on the parent/guardian concession card. In these circumstances, both the parent/guardian concession card and student concession card must still be produced to prove eligibility.

Applications must be completed annually in Term 1 (an application does not automatically cover all secondary school years).

Independent students may also apply using their own Centrelink Health Care Card when declared independent by Centrelink (e.g. living away from home). In this instance, a letter of confirmation of independence status from Centrelink is to accompany the application.

Where a student, meeting all other SAS eligibility, is in receipt of the Centrelink Parent Payment, the student is deemed an adult (as they are now responsible for a child) and must complete the application form as both parent and student.

1.2 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Secondary Assistance Scheme applications for parents/guardians with students enrolled at public schools must be obtained from the school. Applications completed prior to the start of Term 1, 2023 must not be submitted to the Department until the commencement of Term 1 to confirm the student's enrolment at the school.

Applications must be completed annually in Term 1 (an application does not automatically cover all secondary school years).

1.2.1 ELIGIBILITY

To claim the public schools Secondary Assistance Scheme allowance, an applicant must satisfy the following eligibility requirements:

- The Parent/Guardian holds an eligible concession card and the student/s being claimed is/are listed on the card. (see 1.1 for exceptions).
- The student is enrolled in Years 7 to 12 studying a full-time secondary course at a Western Australian public school.
- Applicants may be eligible up to and including the year the student turns 18 i.e. not eligible if born in 2004 or before.
- The applicant must not have previously received the allowance for the same student enrolled at another school in the same year.
- The allowance for the student has not previously been claimed by another parent/guardian in the same year.
- Students who have their own Health Care Card and are financially dependent on their parent/guardian may not apply (the application is to be made by the parent/guardian only, unless the student is declared independent by Centrelink). (See 1.1).
- The applicant is not a foster parent. Foster parents cannot apply as the child is a Child in Care of the Department of Communities Child Protection and Family Support, which is responsible for all associated costs.
- The applicant is not in receipt of the ABSTUDY School Fees Allowance (\$78 or \$156) from Centrelink. ABSTUDY School Fees Allowance recipients, please refer to 1.5.

1.2.2 EDUCATION PROGRAM ALLOWANCE PAYMENT

An amount of \$235 will be paid to the school for eligible parents/guardians of students in Years 7 to 12. Payments are made to schools in the April gateway and subsequent gateways as appropriate. Other payments (e.g. applications for overseas and interstate applicants made later in the school year) will be made as appropriate.

When a student enrolls at another school after the commencement of the school year, the school will transfer the unused portion to the new school through specific arrangements with parents and the schools concerned.

YEARS 7 TO 10

The Education Program Allowance will be paid directly to the school and in the first instance, will be applied towards the voluntary contribution. If the voluntary contribution is less than \$235, then the difference will be applied against charges or as negotiated with the parent/guardian.

YEARS 11 TO 12

The Education Program Allowance will be paid directly to the school and in the first instance, will be applied towards course charges. Following this, the allowance may be allocated to costs as negotiated with the parent/guardian.

Applications submitted for students who have transferred from interstate or arrived from overseas who enrol during the year after Term 1 will receive a pro-rata Education Program Allowance payment of \$58.75 per term enrolled.

1.2.3 CLOTHING ALLOWANCE PAYMENT

Claimants who satisfy the eligibility criteria will receive payment of \$115. Where parents nominate the Clothing Allowance be paid directly to them, bank account details must be provided on the Secondary Assistance Scheme application form. Alternatively, parents can nominate the Clothing Allowance be paid directly to the school, to be applied towards uniforms, the voluntary contribution, charges, voluntary approved requests or personal items.

If the student leaves the school during the year, unused clothing allowance funds, if due, can be arranged in consultation with the parent/guardian to be forwarded to the new Western Australian school or refunded to the parent.

Claimants that submit applications for students who have transferred from interstate or arrived from overseas who enrol during the year will receive the full \$115 Clothing Allowance.

1.3 NON GOVERNMENT (PRIVATE SCHOOLS)

Secondary Assistance Scheme applications for parents/guardians with students enrolled at non government schools must be obtained from the school. Applications completed prior to the start of Term 1, 2023 must not be submitted to the Department of Education until the commencement of Term 1 to confirm the student's enrolment at the school.

Applications must be completed annually in Term 1 (an application does not automatically cover all secondary school years).

1.3.1 ELIGIBILITY

To claim the private schools Secondary Assistance Scheme allowance, an applicant must satisfy the following eligibility requirements:

- The Parent/Guardian holds an eligible concession card and the student/s being claimed is/are listed on the card. (see 1.1 for exceptions).
- The student is enrolled in Years 7 to 12 studying a full-time secondary course at a Western Australian non government (private) school.
- Applicants may be eligible up to and including the year the student turns 18 i.e. not eligible if born in 2004 or before.
- The applicant must not have previously received the allowance for the same student enrolled at another school in the same year.
- The allowance for the student has not previously been claimed by another parent/guardian in the same year.
- Students who have their own Health Care Card and are financially dependent on their parent/guardian may not apply. The application is to be made by the parent/guardian only, unless the student is declared independent by Centrelink.
- The applicant is not a foster parent. Foster parents cannot apply as the child is a Child in Care of the Department of Communities Child Protection and Family Support, which is responsible for all associated costs.
- The applicant is not in receipt of the ABSTUDY School Fees Allowance (\$78 or \$156) from Centrelink. ABSTUDY School Fees Allowance recipients, please refer to 1.5.

1.3.2 EDUCATION PROGRAM ALLOWANCE PAYMENT

An amount of \$235 will be paid to the school for eligible applicants with students in Years 7 to 12.

When a student enrolls at another Western Australian school after the commencement of the school year, the school will transfer the unused portion to the new school through specific arrangements with parents and the schools concerned.

Applications submitted for students who have transferred from interstate or arrived from overseas who enrol after Term 1 will receive a pro-rata Education Program Allowance payment of \$58.75 per term enrolled.

1.3.3 CLOTHING ALLOWANCE PAYMENT

Claimants who satisfy the eligibility criteria will receive payment of \$115. Parents are required to supply their bank account details on the Secondary Assistance Scheme application form to obtain the Clothing Allowance payment.

Claimants that submit applications for students who have transferred from interstate or arrived from overseas who enrol during the year will receive the full \$115 Clothing Allowance.

1.4 HOME EDUCATION

Secondary assistance is available to parents/guardians holding eligible concession cards (see 1.1) providing home education for students studying Years 7 to 12 and of Year 7 to 12 school age.

Applicants must obtain Secondary Assistance Scheme applications from Home Education Moderators at all Education Regional Offices.

Applications must be completed annually in Term 1 (an application does not automatically cover all secondary school years).

1.4.1 ELIGIBILITY

To claim the Home Education Secondary Assistance Scheme allowance, an applicant must satisfy the following eligibility requirements:

- The Parent/Guardian holds an eligible concession card (see 1.1).
- The applicant is providing home education for students studying Years 7 to 12 and of Year 7 to 12 school age.
- Applicants may be eligible up to and including the year the student turns 18 i.e. not eligible if born in 2004 or before.
- A letter of registration from the Education Regional Office stating that home education is approved for the current year must be submitted with the application form.
- Applicants must not have previously received the allowance for the same student in 2023.
- The allowance for the student has not previously been claimed by another parent/guardian in the same year.
- The applicant is not a foster parent. Foster parents cannot apply as the child is a Child in Care of the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, which is responsible for all associated costs.
- The applicant is not in receipt of the ABSTUDY School Fees Allowance (\$78 or \$156) from Centrelink. ABSTUDY School Fees Allowance recipients, please refer to 1.5.

1.4.2 EDUCATION PROGRAM ALLOWANCE PAYMENT

Applicants who satisfy the eligibility criteria will receive a payment of \$235. Parents are required to supply their bank account details on the Secondary Assistance Scheme application form to obtain the Education Program Allowance payment.

1.4.3 CLOTHING ALLOWANCE PAYMENT

Applicants who satisfy the eligibility criteria will receive payment of \$115. Parents are required to supply their bank account details on the Secondary Assistance Scheme application form to obtain the Clothing Allowance payment.

1.5 ABSTUDY SUPPLEMENT ALLOWANCE

Parents/Students in receipt of the ABSTUDY School Fees Allowance (\$78 or \$156) from Centrelink may apply for the Secondary Assistance Scheme – ABSTUDY Supplement Allowance. ABSTUDY Supplement Allowance application forms are available at Western Australian public and non government (private) schools starting Term 1, 2023.

Applications must be completed annually in Term 1 (an application does not automatically cover all secondary school years).

1.5.1 ELIGIBILITY

To claim the ABSTUDY Supplement Allowance, an applicant must satisfy the following eligibility requirements:

- The Parent/Guardian holds an eligible concession card and the student/s being claimed is/are listed on the card. (see 1.1 for exceptions).
- The student is enrolled in Year 7 to 12 studying a full-time secondary course at a Western Australian public or non government (private) school.
- Applicants may be eligible up to and including the year the student turns 18 i.e. not eligible if born in 2004 or before.
- The applicants must not have previously received the allowance when students enrolled at another school in the same year; or received the Secondary Assistance Scheme allowance.
- The school or parent must receive the \$78 or \$156 School Fee Allowance from Centrelink in 2023.
- Students who have their own Health Care Card and are financially dependent on their parent/guardian may not apply (the application is to be made by the parent/guardian only, unless the student is declared independent by Centrelink).
- The applicant is not a foster parent. Foster parents cannot apply as the child is a Child in Care of the Department of Communities Child Protection and Family Support, which are responsible for all associated costs.

1.5.2 EDUCATION PROGRAM ALLOWANCE PAYMENT

An amount of \$79 will be paid to the school for eligible applicants with students in Years 7 to 12.

When a student enrolls at another school after the commencement of the school year, the school will transfer the unused portion to the new school through specific arrangements with parents and the schools concerned.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS - YEARS 7 TO 10

The Education Program Allowance will be paid directly to the school and in the first instance will be applied towards the voluntary contribution. If the voluntary contribution is less than \$79 then the difference will be applied against charges or as negotiated with the parent/guardian.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS - YEARS 11 TO 12

The Education Program Allowance will be paid directly to the school and in the first instance will be applied towards course charges. Following this, the allowance may be allocated to costs as negotiated with the parent/guardian.

NON GOVERNMENT (PRIVATE) SCHOOLS - YEARS 7 TO 12

An amount of \$79 will be paid to the school for eligible applicants with students in Years 7 to 12.

BOARDING AWAY FROM HOME ALLOWANCE

The State Government, through the Department of Education, provides financial support to eligible parents through the Boarding Away from Home Allowance (BAHA). BAHA is available to parents/guardians of: isolated children, students attending agricultural colleges and students required to board in order to enrol in gifted and talented programs (as per below table).

| Boarding Away from Home Allowance type | Primary Eligibility | Payment (capped at \$1,350) |
|---|---|--|
| FOR ISOLATED CHILDREN | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/guardian receives AIC* | Pro-rata based on the number of terms attended |
| AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES SPECIAL SUBSIDY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/guardian does not receive AIC* • Student attends WA Agricultural College | Pro-rata based on the number of terms attended |
| GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAMS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent/guardian does not receive AIC* • Student boards at Albany or City Beach Residential College | Pro-rata based on the number of terms attended |

* The Commonwealth Government Services Australia (Centrelink) Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Boarding Allowance or Second Home Allowance

2.1 BOARDING AWAY FROM HOME ALLOWANCE (FOR ISOLATED CHILDREN)

This allowance assists parents in isolated locations who do not have access to a primary or secondary school with boarding costs.

The application forms will be available at the boarding facility and must be completed for each school year the student resides at a boarding facility. Parents/Guardians who receive the Second Home Allowance can contact the Financial Planning and Resourcing Directorate directly for the application form.

The closing date for the Boarding Away from Home Allowance applications (for isolated children) is 24 November 2023. All completed Boarding Away from Home Allowance applications should be posted to the Allowances Coordinator, Financial Planning and Resourcing Directorate.

Applications must be completed annually (an application does not automatically cover all school years).

2.1.1 ELIGIBILITY

The Boarding Away from Home Allowance is only available to resident Western Australians who have qualified for the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Boarding Allowance or Second Home Allowance (which is available from Centrelink). More information about the AIC can be obtained by telephoning Centrelink on 13 23 18.

The student must be enrolled in a Western Australian primary or secondary school (Kindergarten to Year 12).

2.1.2 PAYMENT

The allowance for 2023 is \$1,350 for students who board away for the full year, with payment being made at the end of Term four. Where a student only boards for part of the year, a pro-rata payment will be made based on the number of terms boarded.

The minimum stay with a Boarding Provider is four weeks for a pro-rata payment.

The payment/advice will be sent directly to the boarding provider where the student attends a public Residential College (i.e. Albany, Broome, City Beach, Esperance, Geraldton, Merredin, Narrogin, Northam or Moora; or where a student attends a public Western Australian College of Agriculture (ie. Cunderdin, Denmark, Harvey, Morawa, Narrogin) and is to be deducted from the residential accommodation fees only.

If the student does not board at a public Residential College or Western Australian College of Agriculture then the allowance is paid to one of the following at the discretion of the parent: the boarding facility, school or parent. Where parents nominate the allowance be paid directly to them, bank account details must be provided on the application form. If the allowance is paid directly to the school then it is to be deducted from the residential boarding fees only.

2.2 BOARDING AWAY FROM HOME ALLOWANCE - AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES SPECIAL SUBSIDY

This allowance is to assist parents with secondary students attending and boarding at a Western Australian College of Agriculture, with boarding costs.

Claimants apply for the subsidy through the Western Australian College of Agriculture where their child is boarding. The college provides application forms to parents and payment will be made directly to the Agricultural College in October 2023.

The closing date for the Agricultural College Special Subsidy Boarding Away from Home Allowance is 31 July 2023. Application forms should be submitted direct to the Agricultural College their child attends.

Applications must be completed annually (an application does not automatically cover all school years).

2.2.1 ELIGIBILITY

- Student is enrolled and boarding at the Catholic Agricultural College or
- Student is enrolled and boarding at a Western Australian College of Agriculture.

Parent/student is not in receipt of:

- Youth Allowance at the away from home rate;
- AIC Allowance from Centrelink; or
- ABSTUDY (if full boarding paid by Centrelink).

Note: This allowance is only available to students boarding at the Agricultural Colleges. If students are boarding at another location, they are not entitled to claim this special subsidy (they may be eligible for the Boarding Away from Home Allowance for Isolated Children, if they are in receipt of AIC Boarding Allowance or Second Home Allowance from Centrelink).

2.2.2 PAYMENT

The Allowance for 2023 is \$1,350. The payment/advice will be sent directly to each Agricultural College and it is to be deducted from the residential accommodation fees only.

If a student only boards at a Western Australian College of Agriculture (public or non government) for part of the year, a pro-rata payment will be made based on the number of terms attended.

The minimum stay with a Boarding Provider is four weeks for a pro-rata payment.

2.3 BOARDING AWAY FROM HOME ALLOWANCE - GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAMS

This allowance is to assist rural and remote parents with secondary students enrolled in gifted and talented programs at public schools and boarding at Albany or City Beach Residential College with boarding costs.

Claimants apply for the subsidy through the Albany or City Beach Residential College where their child is boarding. The college provides application forms to parents and payment will be made directly to Albany or City Beach Residential College in October 2023.

The closing date for the Gifted and Talented Programs Boarding Away from Home Allowance is 31 July 2023. Application forms should be submitted direct to Albany or City Beach Residential College.

Applications must be completed annually (an application does not automatically cover all school years).

2.3.1 ELIGIBILITY

- Student is enrolled in a gifted and talented program at a public school; and
- Student is boarding at Albany or City Beach Residential College.

Parent/student is not in receipt of:

- Youth Allowance at the away from home rate;
- AIC Allowance from Centrelink; or
- ABSTUDY (if full boarding paid by Centrelink).

Note: This allowance is only available to students boarding at the Albany or City Beach Residential College. If students are boarding at another location, they are not entitled to claim this special subsidy (they may be eligible for the Boarding Away from Home Allowance for Isolated Children, if they are in receipt of AIC Boarding Allowance or Second Home Allowance from Centrelink).

2.3.2 PAYMENT

The Allowance for 2023 is \$1,350. The payment/advice will be sent directly to the Albany or City Beach Residential College and it is to be deducted from the residential accommodation fees only.

If a student only boards at the Albany or City Beach Residential College for part of the year, a pro-rata payment will be made based on the number of terms attended.

The minimum stay with a Boarding Provider is four weeks for a pro-rata payment.

3 FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on the above allowances can be obtained by contacting:

Financial Planning and Resourcing Directorate
Department of Education
151 Royal Street
East Perth WA 6004

Telephone: (08) 9264 4516 Facsimile: (08) 9264 5162
Email: student.allowances@education.wa.edu.au

4 STUDENT ALLOWANCES AND CONCESSIONS NOT ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

4.1 STATE GOVERNMENT

4.1.1 DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES

The Department of Communities has a useful website regarding concessions:

Web: <https://concessions.communities.wa.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

4.1.1.1 WANSLEA GRANDCARERS SUPPORT SCHEME

Wanslea administer the Grandcarers support scheme on behalf of the Department of Communities

Web: <https://www.wanslea.org.au/programs/grandcarers-support-scheme>

Ph 1800 794 909 (9am – 4.00pm Monday to Friday)

4.1.2 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

The Student Travel Subsidy Scheme provides assistance to students travelling from a geographical area known as the Defined Remote Area (DRA) to attend school or university, regardless of whether there is an educational facility locally available.

Web: <https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/aboutus/student-travel-subsidies.asp>

Phone: 1300 660 147

4.2 COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT

4.2.1 SERVICES AUSTRALIA (CENTRELINK)

Web: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/centrelink>

Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Phone: 132 318

ABSTUDY Phone: 1800 132 317

Youth Allowance Phone: 132 490

5 DEFINITIONS

5.1 PARENT/GUARDIAN:

In relation to a child, means a person who at law has responsibility –

(a) for the long-term care, welfare and development of the child; or

(b) for the day to day care, welfare and development of the child.

6 HISTORY OF CHANGES

| Effective Date | Last update date | Version no. | TRIM no. | Notes |
|------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| 5 October 2017 | | 1.0 | D16/0664195 | 2017 Guidelines updated to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 school year. • 2018 term dates. • Parent/Guardian definition. • BAHA payment amount. • Wanslea Grandcarers Support Scheme. • History of Changes table. • Removed reference to Country High Schools Hostel Authority. • Removal of Year 7 Special Case Consideration. |
| 15 December 2017 | 24 November 2017 | 1.1 | D17/0443651 | BAHA for Isolated Children updated in line with current Centrelink AIC Guidelines |
| 1 January 2020 | 1 October 2018 | 1.0 | D18/0440435 | 2018 Guidelines updated to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2019 school year. • 2019 term dates. • Private schools now referred to a Non Government schools. • BAHA payment amount. • History of Changes table. |
| 1 January 2020 | 1 October 2019 | 1.0 | D19/0388193 | 2019 Guidelines updated to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2020 school year. • 2020 term dates. • BAHA payment amount, removal of BAHA Respite. • Updated Department of Education logo • History of Changes table • ConcessionsWA web address updated. |
| 20 May 2020 | 20 May 2020 | 1.0 | D19/033193 | 2020 Guidelines updated to include SAS extension – now able to apply in Term 1 and 2, closure date is 3 July 2020, card can be eligible up to 3 July 2020. |

| | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--|
| 1 January 2021 | 1 October 2020 | 1.0 | D20/0442376 | <p>2020 Guidelines updated to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021 school year & term dates • Department of Human Services (Centrelink) change of name Services Australia (Centrelink) • Concession card cannot be used if expired in SAS section • BAHA payment amount • History of Changes table |
| 31 July 2021 | 30 August | 1.0 | D21/0377785 | <p>2021 Guidelines updated to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2022 school year & term dates • BAHA payment amount and closing dates • Albany Residential College added to Gifted and Talented programs • URL address (link) for Interpreters Services removed • History of Changes table • ABSTUDY Boarding changed to ABSTUDY |
| 13 July 2022 | 1 October 2021 | 1.0 | D22/0536773 | <p>2022 Guidelines updated to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 school year & term dates • BAHA payment amount increasing to \$1,350 • BAHA closing dates • History of Changes table • Residential boarding fee changed to Residential accommodation fee |