

Centrelink

Centrelink assists people in becoming self-sufficient and supports those in need. Those 'in need' may include students, carers, those with a disability, parents, the unemployed or people in crisis.

Types of payments available to students

- Youth allowance - assistance for full time students aged between 16 and 24.
- Austudy payment - support for full time students aged 25 and over.
- Newstart - support for jobseekers, including part time students.
- ABSTUDY - support for Indigenous students.
- other benefits may be given to those who are parents, carers or have a disability etc. and are also studying

Eligibility

Eligibility for payment and rates of payment are usually determined by income and asset tests. You may be required to report on any of the following, including changes if/once you start receiving the payment:

- your income and assets
- your partner's income and assets
- if you are not considered 'independent', your parents' income and assets

Other support payments you may be eligible for

- Start-Up Scholarships- \$1,097 for each 6 months of eligible study (as of July 2011).
- Fares Allowance
- Rent Assistance
- Advance Payments of up to \$1000 per year for those eligible. The advanced payment is paid back to Centrelink through your regular fortnightly payment.
- There are also other support payments from Centrelink such as urgent payments and crisis payments.
- Centrepay scheme - free direct bill paying service that can be used to pay rent, electricity, water, gas, child care, education costs etc.
- Health Care Card - entitles you to reduced costs for medication under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), free ambulance and free dental treatment in public hospitals. You may be eligible for a Health Care Card even though you may not be receiving a Centrelink benefit.
- Centrelink also offers a Pensioner Education Supplement to those people in receipt of disability pension and parenting allowance.

Some tips for dealing with Centrelink

1. Don't listen to hearsay or what your friends think you may be eligible for. Always apply yourself.
2. Keep copies of documentation and confirm verbal advice in writing.
3. If you are not happy with an outcome or decision, you can always seek advice and appeal.
4. Treat staff with respect.

Getting help with Centrelink

You may find it difficult to navigate through all the information and eligibility criteria at Centrelink – if you do, there are a number of ways to get help. UWS Welfare Officers can assist you with any Centrelink issues see www.uws.edu.au/welfareservice. Also the social worker at your local Centrelink office is a good point of contact.

More information

The Centrelink website has up-to-date information about entitlements, rates of payments, eligibility and common questions. You can also lodge an application online via www.centrelink.gov.au or contact Centrelink directly:

Employment services	132 850
Youth and students line	132 490
ABSTUDY	132 317
Disability service	132 717
Multicultural line	131 202
General enquiries	132 300