

Continuation of ABSTUDY boarding instalments for Term 2

Changes to ABSTUDY boarding instalments for Term 2, 2020

The Australian Government has introduced temporary changes to ABSTUDY during the Coronavirus pandemic. These changes aim to support board providers to maintain continuity of education services for students and protect boarding places until students can return.

Payments will continue to schools and board providers for Term 2 if all these apply:

- Student was approved for ABSTUDY boarding entitlements in Term 1;
- Board provider holds a boarding place for the student in Term 2;
- Student intends to return to board as soon as possible in Term 2; and
- School/board provider continues to support students studying remotely using other methods such as online learning.

Students who physically return to school and their boarding arrangement for Term 2 will be assessed under normal ABSTUDY provisions.

Payment on Advice not required in Term 2

Due to the Government's health advice and ongoing travel restrictions, most students may not return to their boarding arrangement during this term, or may commence later in Term 2.

From 7 May 2020, boarding instalments will be paid to eligible schools and board providers for Term 2, based on Term 1 information.

You do not need to do anything to receive these payments. You will not need to:

- Complete the Payment on Advice process for this term; or
- Confirm student's first date of attendance.

We may contact you to confirm some students study arrangements from Term 1, to determine eligibility for Term 2 payments.

Tax File Numbers

Students 16 years or older must supply their TFN in order to be paid ABSTUDY.

To ensure the safety of students during the COVID-19 pandemic, Centrelink will apply a temporary TFN exemption for students who do not have a TFN.

Please **do not** tell students to apply for a TFN online via the ATO website **or** to lodge a NAT1589 form at Centrelink during this period.

Correct contact channels

Need to contact us? Specific contact channels have been set up for Third Party Organisations.

Please assist us by ensuring you are using the correct channels.

See attachment detailing the correct channels for contact.

Boarding and tuition fees for Term 2

You do not need to tell us of any changes to board or tuition fees for Term 2. This includes any discounts, rebates, or bursaries provided to families for students not attending the boarding facilities.

We will use the board and tuition fees you have already provided for Term 1 to calculate Term 2 instalments for schools and board providers.

Changes to boarding arrangements or school enrolments for Term 2

You must tell us if a student changes their study or boarding arrangements for Term 2. This includes students who:

- Discontinue study;
- Take up another boarding arrangement; or
- Forfeit their boarding place in favour of enrolment at their local school.

In these circumstances, we need to reassess a student's entitlement and ensure ABSTUDY payments follow the student.

Travel

Travel for students returning to boarding

If travel is required for students to return to boarding, please contact us allowing a minimum of 7 days' notice.

It is important to consider travel restrictions and quarantine requirements that may apply to students and supervisors. For further information, please visit: www.health.gov.au and relevant state or territory websites.

Requested travel dates may not be accommodated due to reduced flights and travel options available.

It may be a more suitable option to organise travel and seek reimbursement (see attached reimbursement information).

Further information will be provided on bulk travel requests in the future.