



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle

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Strong Student Support in Federal Budget

Federal Member for Newcastle, Sharon Grierson MP, today welcomed new and improved support for students in the Rudd Labor Government's 2009 Federal Budget.

"This Budget contained welcome news for all Australian university students. After years of neglect under the Howard Government, tertiary students and their institutions are now receiving the support and investment they need – and deserve."

"The Rudd Labor Government is seeking to make tertiary access a real and attainable goal for all Australians, no matter their background."

For students, this will include:

- Lifting the Parental Income Test for Youth Allowance to align it with the Family Tax Benefit Part A income test, benefiting around 102,000 students
- Extending income support to all eligible students undertaking course work Masters programs
- Reducing the age of independence from 25 to 22 years, to be phased in by 2012
- New Student Start Up and Relocation Scholarships
- \$434 million reform package to reach the Government's target of students from disadvantaged backgrounds representing 20 percent of undergraduate enrolments by 2020

And for universities:

- Almost \$3 billion into tertiary education and innovation infrastructure through the Education Investment Fund
- An increased indexation rate for universities to help meet the cost of quality teaching, learning and research
- \$57 million over four years to establish a new national quality and standards agency (as a core component of its response to the Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education)
- Universities to be funded on the basis of student demand, which will see an extra 50,000 students commencing studies in 2013, producing 217,000 additional graduates by 2025

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