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## **RUN WELCOMES CHANGES TO YOUTH ALLOWANCE TO HELP REGIONAL STUDENTS**

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) welcomes changes to Youth Allowance which will make it easier for rural and regional students to go to university.

The changes, passed by the Federal Parliament on November 12, will result in all dependent children being taken into consideration in the assessment for Youth Allowance eligibility, softening the reductions in support as family income increases.

The Chair of RUN, Professor Jan Thomas, said the changes mean that more regional students will qualify for Youth Allowance to help them go to university.

“Far fewer regional Australians attend university compared to people in capital cities. The changes to Youth Allowance are great news and will encourage more people from the regions to pursue higher education,” Professor Thomas said.

“Regional Australians who receive an offer to go to university are more than twice as likely to defer, due to financial pressures, compared to metropolitan Australians. Providing more regional students access to Youth Allowance will help.

“It is critical to grow the proportion of educated professionals working in the regions, if regional Australia is to fully be part of an innovative economy in the national interest,” Professor Thomas said.

“Students who attend university in regional Australia stay and work the regions. Living costs in regional Australian towns are well below that in capitals, and offer an attractive option for students.”

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