

Overview

The HECS-HELP benefit is a government initiative that was introduced in the 2008 Federal Budget to encourage graduates of maths or science courses of study and early childhood education courses of study to take up employment in specified occupations, and further, in the case of early childhood education graduates, specified locations including rural and regional areas, Indigenous communities and areas of socio-economic disadvantage.

The 2009 Budget announced an extension of the benefit to students who graduate from an eligible education or nursing (including midwifery) course of study after 30 June 2009. This extension to the HECS-HELP benefit guidelines was passed by parliament in March 2010.

What is the HECS-HELP benefit?

The HECS-HELP benefit is not a cash payment. It provides for a reduction in the compulsory HELP repayment included on an income tax notice of assessment or, for early childhood education teachers who do not have to make a compulsory repayment, a reduction in the accumulated HELP debt.

How to apply

- Eligible graduates can apply for the HECS-HELP benefit by completing the *HECS-HELP benefit application* form, available on the ATO's website. Please ask one of our staff if you require assistance with completing this form.

Maximum annual amounts

Income year	Early childhood education teachers	Maths or Science graduates	Nurses	Educators
2008–09	\$1,600.00	\$1,500.00	–	–
2009–10	\$1,662.40	\$1,558.50	\$1,558.50	\$1,558.50

The maximum annual benefit amount is indexed each year.

Graduates have two years from the end of the income year for which they are applying, to lodge their application.

Eligible graduates may apply for the HECS-HELP benefit on an annual basis for the life of the benefit which is a total lifetime claim of 260 weeks. The claim does not need to be for a continuous period. The number of weeks claimed each year is subtracted from the 260 weeks until the entitlement is reduced to nil.

Who is eligible?

You are eligible for the benefit if you:

Eligibility	Early childhood education teacher	Maths or science graduate	Nursing or midwifery graduate	Education graduate
Course eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> graduated from an early childhood education teaching course of study were a HECS liable or Commonwealth supported student for some or all of that course had a HECS/HELP debt at the time of course completion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> graduated from an undergraduate natural or physical sciences course of study after 30/6/2008 were a Commonwealth supported student for some or all of that course had a HELP debt at the time of course completion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> graduated from a nursing or midwifery course of study after 30/6/2009 were a Commonwealth supported student for some or all of that course had a HELP debt at the time of course completion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> graduated from an education course of study after 30/6/2009 were a Commonwealth supported student for some or all of that course had a HELP debt at the time of course completion.
Occupation eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are employed as an early childhood education teacher in a childcare centre, kindergarten or pre-school for a minimum of 1 week in the income year for which you are applying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are employed in a mathematics or science related occupation, (including as a high school or primary school teacher) for a minimum of 1 week in the income year for which you are applying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are employed as a registered nurse, registered midwife or enrolled nurse for a minimum of 1 week in the income year for which you are applying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are employed as an early childhood, primary, middle, secondary or special education teacher or a school principal for a minimum of 1 week in the income year for which you are applying.
Location eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regional or remote area, Indigenous Aus community or an area of high socio-economic disadvantage 	N/A	N/A	N/A
Eligible debt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> since completing course have not repaid your HELP debt have a HELP debt that relates to your course of study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> since completing course have not repaid your HELP debt have a HELP debt that relates to your course of study are required to make a compulsory HELP repayment this year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> since completing course have not repaid your HELP debt have a HELP debt that relates to your course of study are required to make a compulsory HELP repayment this year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> since completing course have not repaid your HELP debt have a HELP debt that relates to your course of study are required to make a compulsory HELP repayment this year

Source: ATO Website



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