Austudy – Payment Trends and Profile Report
June 2015

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## About Austudy

Austudy is the major income support payment made to full-time students and apprentices who are aged 25 years and older.

## Austudy Quick Facts

Student payment numbers fluctuate with the educational semesters. The number of recipients was 1.3% lower than June 2014, but 3.3 % higher than June 2013.

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| **Table 1: Austudy Quick Facts** |
| **Quick Facts** | **Jun-13** | **Jun-14** | **Jun-15** | **Change Jun-14 to Jun-15** | **Change Jun-13 to Jun-15** |
|
| Total Population | 46,039  | 48,197  | 47,569  | -1.3% | 3.3% |
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| Higher Ed | 31,786  | 32,999  | 31,635  | -4.1% | -0.5% |
| School | 623  | 341  | 338  | -0.9% | -45.7% |
| VET | 12,213  | 13,471  | 14,479  | 7.5% | 18.6% |
| Apprentice | 524  | 558  | 505  | -9.5% | -3.6% |
| Not Specified | 893  | 828  | 612  | -26.1% | -31.5% |
| Recipients with Earnings | 13,618  | 14,133  | 14,463  | 2.3% | 6.2% |

## Austudy Population – Time Series

The total Austudy population has been trending upwards over the last ten years, however the population decreased by 1.3% compared to June 2014. Student payments are seasonal.

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| **Table 2: Austudy Time Series** |
| **Month and Year** | **Recipients** |
| Jun-05 | 30,809 |
| Jun-06 | 27,728 |
| Jun-07 | 27,869 |
| Jun-08 | 28,776 |
| Jun-09 | 34,175 |
| Jun-10 | 37,342 |
| Jun-11 | 39,213 |
| Jun-12 | 41,042 |
| Jun-13 | 46,039 |
| Jun-14 | 48,197 |
| Jun-15 | 47,569 |

## Austudy Expenditure

Expenditure on Austudy has increased over time, mainly attributed to increases in recipient numbers and payment rates (in March 2010 the base rate for singles was $377.00, compared to $426.80 in March 2015). The 2014-15 expenditure on Austudy was $650 million. Expenditure on Austudy makes up 0.04% of Gross Domestic Product (ABS National Accounts).

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| **Table 3: Austudy Expenditure** |
| **Financial Year** | **Expenditure ($’000)** | **% of Gross Domestic Product** |
| 2010-11 | 418,819,000 | 0.03% |
| 2011-12 | 495,121,000 | 0.03% |
| 2012-13 | 558,324,000 | 0.04% |
| 2013-14 | 637,191,000 | 0.04% |
| 2014-15 | 650,284,000 | 0.04% |

## Austudy by Age Group

27.7% of Austudy recipients are aged 35-49 years, while 8.3% are aged 50 and over. The majority of recipients are aged between 25 and 34, making up 64% of the total population.

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| **Table 4: Austudy by Age Group** |
| **Age Group** | **Jun-11** | **Jun-12** | **Jun-13** | **Jun-14** | **Jun-15** |
| 25-34 | 25,300 | 26,503 | 29,573 | 30,925 | 30,442 |
| 35-49 | 11,057 | 11,424 | 12,882 | 13,316 | 13,182 |
| 50+ | 2,856 | 3,115 | 3,584 | 3,956 | 3,945 |

## Austudy by Gender

There are slightly more females than males on Austudy, with 48% male and 52% female.

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| **Table 5: Austudy by Gender** |
| **Gender** | **Jun-11** | **Jun-12** | **Jun-13** | **Jun-14** | **Jun-15** |
| Male | 19,294 | 19,942 | 22,056 | 23,187 | 22,844 |
| Female | 19,919 | 21,100 | 23,983 | 25,010 | 24,725 |

## Austudy by Relationship Status

At June 2015, 78% of Austudy recipients were single, the proportion has remained stable over the reported period.

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| **Table 6: Austudy by Relationship Status** |
| **Relationship Status** | **Jun-11** | **Jun-12** | **Jun-13** | **Jun-14** | **Jun-15** |
| Not Partnered | 29,917 | 31,568 | 35,593 | 37,337 | 36,964 |
| Partnered | 9,296 | 9,474 | 10,446 | 10,860 | 10,605 |

## Austudy by Indigenous Indicator

At June 2015 the Indigenous proportion was 0.5%. The small proportion is due to the majority of Indigenous students being on ABSTUDY, rather than Austudy. Indigenous recipients include only those who have voluntarily identified as Indigenous.

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| **Table 7: Austudy by Indigenous Indicator** |
| **Indigenous Indicator** | **Jun-11** | **Jun-12** | **Jun-13** | **Jun-14** | **Jun-15** |
| Non Indigenous | 39,103 | 40,900 | 45,874 | 47,961 | 47,312 |
| Indigenous | 110 | 142 | 165 | 236 | 257 |
| Percentage | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.4% | 0.5% | 0.5% |

## Austudy by Rate of Payment

The proportion of recipients on full-rate is comparable with June 2014 with a small decrease from 83.3% at June 2014 to 82.6% at June 2015.

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| **Table 8: Austudy by Rate of Payment** |
| **Rate of Payment** | **Jun-11** | **Jun-12** | **Jun-13** | **Jun-14** | **Jun-15** |
| Full Rate | 30,467 | 31,806 | 38,278 | 40,172 | 39,276 |
| Part Rate | 7,234 | 7,475 | 6,389 | 6,611 | 6,653 |
| Zero Rate | 1,251 | 1,389 | 1,101 | 1,138 | 1,220 |
| Other | 261 | 372 | 271 | 276 | 420 |

## Austudy by Earnings

The proportion of recipients reporting earnings has remained relatively stable over time. 30.4% of Austudy recipients had earnings as at June 2015, up from 29.3% at June 2014.

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| **Table 9: Austudy by Earnings** |
| **Reporting Earnings** | **Jun-11** | **Jun-12** | **Jun-13** | **Jun-14** | **Jun-15** |
| Nil Earnings | 27,808 | 29,525 | 32,421 | 34,064 | 33,106 |
| Had Earnings | 11,405 | 11,517 | 13,618 | 14,133 | 14,463 |

## Austudy by Duration on Income Support

As at June 2015, 65.2% of recipients were classified as long-term, the proportion has increased from 63% at June 2014. The higher proportion is expected as educational courses are generally longer than one year.

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| **Table 10: Austudy by Duration on Income Support** |
| **Duration** | **Jun-11** | **Jun-12** | **Jun-13** | **Jun-14** | **Jun-15** |
| Less than 1 year | 15,947 | 16,419 | 18,134 | 17,813 | 16,534 |
| 1 year plus | 23,266 | 24,623 | 27,905 | 30,384 | 31,035 |

## Austudy by Remoteness Area

The majority of Austudy recipients reside in major cities (79.4%). A further 19.9% live in regional areas (outer and inner), while the remaining recipients are in remote or very remote locations. This does not reflect the general working age population, which has a lower proportion of the population living in major cities (71%) and and a higher proportion living in regional areas (27%) (ABS Census 2011).

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| **Table 11: Austudy by Remoteness Area** |
| **Remoteness Area** | **Jun-15** | **Percentage** |
| Inner Regional Australia | 7,214 | 15.2% |
| Major Cities of Australia | 37,759 | 79.4% |
| Outer Regional Australia | 2,269 | 4.8% |
| Remote Australia | 118 | 0.2% |
| Very Remote Australia | 41 | 0.1% |
| Not Assigned to a Remoteness Area | 168 | 0.4% |

## Austudy by State

The highest proportion of recipients were located in New South Wales at 29.5% followed by Victoria at 28.1% and 21.7% in Queensland, these proportions are expected due to higher state populations.

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| **Table 12: Austudy by State** |
| **State** | **Jun-15** |
| New South Wales | 14,013 |
| Victoria | 13,380 |
| Queensland | 10,312 |
| South Australia | 4,020 |
| Western Australia | 3,743 |
| Tasmania | 1,192 |
| Northern Territory | 148 |
| Australian Capital Territory | 738 |
| Unknown | 23 |

## Austudy by Sector

Higher Education remains the main level of study for recipients of Austudy, with 66.5% of recipients. A further 30.4% are undertaking Vocational Education and Training (VET).

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| **Table 13: Austudy by Sector of Study** |
| **Sector** | **Jun-15** | **Percentage** |
| Higher Education | 31,635 | 66.5% |
| School | 338 | 0.7% |
| Vocational Education and Training | 14,479 | 30.4% |
| Apprentice | 505 | 1.1% |
| Not Specified | 612 | 1.3% |

## Circumstances before receiving Austudy

The majority of recipients moving onto Austudy did not transfer from another income support payment. The largest numbers of recipients transferring from another payment comparing June 2014 and June 2015 came from Newstart Allowance (28.8%) and Youth Allowance (student) (4.4%).

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| **Table 14: Circumstances before receiving Austudy** |
| **Circumstance** | **Recipients** | **Percentage** |
| Not Receiving Income Support | 16,438 | 62% |
| Working Age Payment | 8,682 | 33% |
| Student Payment | 1,189 | 4% |
| Other Payment | 225 | 1% |

## Circumstances after receiving Austudy

Comparing June 2014 and June 2015, the majority of recipients leaving Austudy transferred off payments altogether. Recipients who transferred generally transferred to Newstart Allowance (25.7%).

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| **Table 15: Circumstances after receiving Austudy** |
| **Circumstance** | **Recipients** | **Percentage** |
| Not Receiving Income Support | 19,103 | 70% |
| Working Age Payment | 7,641 | 28% |
| Student Payment | 22 | 0% |
| Other Payment | 396 | 1% |

## Data Descriptions

**Austudy:** Austudy is the major income support payment made to full-time students and apprentices who are aged 25 years and older.

**Recipient Numbers:** Recipients of Austudy who are determined to be current (i.e. entitled to be paid) on the Centrelink payment system.

**Report Details:** Payment trends and profiles report - June 2015 - Produced by the Department of Social Services.

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**Source:** Department of Human Services Administrative data (DSS Extracts)

**Data Date:** Data as at the 26th of June 2015.

**Australian National Accounts:** National Income, Expenditure and Product: Table 34 Time Series Spreadsheets (cat. no. 5206.0).

**Australian Bureau of Statistics Census 2011:** Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011 Census of Population and Housing, Table Builder, RA by AGE5P - Age in Five Year Groups.

## Glossary

**Age Group:** The age group of the recipient.

**Circumstances after Austudy:** This data compares two points in time, one year apart. 'Not Receiving Income Support' describes those who were in receipt of Austudy at the first point in time, who were not receiving an income support payment at the second point in time. This data does not take into account Family Tax Benefit.

**Circumstances before Austudy:** This data compares two points in time, one year apart. 'Not Receiving Income Support' describes those who were not in receipt of an income support payment at the first point in time, who were receiving Austudy at the second point in time. This data does not take into account Family Tax Benefit.

**Duration:** Duration refers to duration on Income Support and may not reflect duration on current payment type.

**Earnings:** Earnings refers to employment earnings reported in the last fortnight of the reported period.

**Expenditure:** Expenditure amount, as reported in the Department's Annual Report. '% of GDP' is the expenditure on the payment as a percentage of Australia's Gross Domestic Product (ABS data - see data source above).

**Indigenous:** Indigenous recipients include only those who have voluntarily identified as Indigenous. This data may therefore represent an undercount.

**Remoteness Area:** Remoteness Areas are based on the recipient's geo-coded address against the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) 2011.

**Rate:** The rate of the recipients payment ('other' include those recipients who, as at the data date, were yet to be paid).

**Relationship Status:** Partnered includes recipients who are married, de-facto or registered.

**Sector:** The type of educational institution the student is enrolled in. Unspecified occurs where there is no current educational institution recorded, these figures are generally higher between semesters of study.

**State:** The State or Territory recorded in the recipient's address.

## Further Information

The Department of Social Services publishes statistics about the various pensions, benefits and family payments which the Department administers, on a quarterly basis on the Australian Government’s centralised data publishing site, [data.gov.au](http://www.data.gov.au/organization/about/department-of-social-services) (http://www.data.gov.au/organization/about/department-of-social-services). A statistical overview is published on an annual basis on the Department’s website, [DSS - Statistical Paper Series](http://www.dss.gov.au/about-the-department/publications-articles/research-publications/statistical-paper-series) (http://www.dss.gov.au/about-the-department/publications-articles/research-publications/statistical-paper-series).

For enquiries email:IncomeSupportInformation@dss.gov.au