



Australian Government
Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations

OS-HELP

support for overseas study

www.goingtouni.gov.au

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What is OS-HELP?

OS-HELP is a loan that assists eligible students, who are based in Australia, to undertake some of their undergraduate study overseas. Students may receive one loan per six-month study period for one or two overseas study periods. These loans will help students with a range of expenses, such as airfares and accommodation.

Who is eligible for an OS-HELP loan?

There are a number of criteria that a student must meet to be eligible for an OS-HELP loan. The main criteria are that a student must be:

- an Australian citizen or the holder of a permanent humanitarian visa;
- a Commonwealth supported student enrolled in an undergraduate course of study; and
- selected by their higher education provider to receive an OS-HELP loan.

Students may only receive an OS-HELP loan after completing 1 EFTSL (equivalent full-time student load) of their course of study and must have units to the value of at least 0.5 EFTSL remaining on completion of their study outside Australia.

If you need help determining the EFTSL requirements, please contact your higher education provider.

Students undertaking their whole course outside Australia are not eligible for OS-HELP.

More details about the eligibility requirements for OS-HELP are available in the *OS-HELP statement of terms and conditions*, which is available from your higher education provider or at www.goingtouni.gov.au.

Can a student receive an OS-HELP loan for overseas study shorter than six months?

Yes. OS-HELP is available for study periods of less than six months but students cannot receive an OS-HELP loan twice for the same six-month period. Students may only receive a maximum of two OS-HELP loans over their lifetime.

How do students apply for an OS-HELP loan?

Students apply to their higher education provider for an OS-HELP loan. A student's application will be assessed against the eligibility criteria set by legislation and any other selection criteria determined by their higher education provider.

Is a loan fee applied to OS-HELP loans?

There is no loan fee for OS-HELP loans.

How are OS-HELP debts repaid?

Your HELP debt is repaid through the tax system once your repayment income is above the minimum repayment threshold for compulsory repayment, even if you are still studying.

The repayment threshold for the current financial year is available at www.goingtouni.gov.au. People can also make voluntary repayments on their debts directly to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Voluntary repayments of \$500 or more will attract a 10% bonus.

Please note that from 1 January 2012, subject to the passage of legislation, the Australian Government will lower the HELP voluntary repayment bonus applied to payments of \$500 or more from 10% to 5%.

Is any interest charged on OS-HELP debts?

HELP debts are indexed each year in line with movements in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to maintain their real value, but are otherwise interest free.

More information

For more information on OS-HELP, including how to apply, contact your higher education provider's student exchange or study abroad office.

For general information on OS-HELP, visit www.goingtouni.gov.au or call **1800 020 108**.