**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**

*Student Assistance (Education Institutions and Courses) Amendment Determination 2017 (No. 1)*

**General outline**

The *Student Assistance (Education Institutions and Courses) Amendment Determination 2017 (No. 1)* (the Amendment Determination) is made under subsection 5D(1) of the *Student Assistance Act 1973* (the Act). Subsection 5D(3) of the Act provides that a determination under subsection 5D(1) is a legislative instrument*.*

The Amendment Determination amends the *Student Assistance (Education Institutions and Courses) Determination 2009 (No. 2)* (the Principal Determination). The Amendment Determination makes technical amendments to the Principal Determination, particularly clarifying course types eligible for student payments, including youth allowance (student), austudy payment, the pensioner education supplement and ABSTUDY (provided they meet the other qualification criteria for those payments).

**Background**

Subsection 5D(1) of the Act provides that the Minister may, for the purposes of the Act, determine in writing that:

1. a course of study or instruction is a secondary course, or a tertiary course; or
2. a part of a course of study or instruction is a part of a secondary course or part of a tertiary course.

The Principal Determination broadly outlines the institutions and courses for the purpose of subsections 3(1) and 5D(1) of the Act, specifying multiple levels of study at higher education institutions and registered training organisations. The determination of these courses for the purposes of the Act allows for students studying these courses to be eligible to receive student payments, subject to other relevant criteria being met.

Under subsection 33(3) of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1901*, where an Act confers a power to make, grant or issue any instrument of a legislative or administrative character (including rules, regulations or by-laws), the power shall be construed as including a power exercisable in the like manner and subject to the like conditions (if any) to repeal, rescind, revoke, amend, or vary any such instrument.

**Commencement**

The Amendment Determination commences on the day after it is registered on the Federal Register of Legislation.

**Consultation**

The Department of Social Services (the Department) notified higher education providers that it was accepting applications to include their Masters courses in the list of Masters courses that are “tertiary courses” for the purposes of the Act. Guidelines for the approval of Masters courses for inclusion in the Principal Determination are available on the Department’s web site at: [www.dss.gov.au/masters.](http://www.dss.gov.au/masters.%20)

The Department undertook consultations with the higher education providers that sought inclusion of their Masters courses in the Amendment Determination.

**Regulation Impact Statement**

The Amendment Determination does not require a Regulatory Impact Statement. The Amendment Determination is not regulatory in nature, will not impact on business activity and will have no, or minimal, compliance costs or competition impact.

**Explanation of the provisions**

Section 1

This section provides that the name of the Determination is the *Student Assistance (Education Institutions and Courses) Amendment Determination 2017 (No.1)*.

Section 2

This section provides that the Amendment Determination commences on the day after it is registered on the Federal Register of Legislation.

Section 3

This section repeals Schedule 3 to the Principal Determination and substitutes a new Schedule 3.

Paragraph 10(1)(b) of the Principal Determination provides that for paragraph 5D(1)(a) of the Act, a tertiary course is a full-time course that is:

1. accredited at Masters level; and
2. specified in Column 2 of the table in Schedule 3 to the Principal Determination; and
3. provided by the education institution specified for that course in Column 1 of that table.

Paragraph 10(2) provides that without limiting subsection 10(1), a course that meets the requirements of paragraphs 10(1)(a) and (b) and is not a full-time course is a tertiary course for the purposes of paragraph 1061PC of the Social Security Act 1991.

New Masters courses in Schedule 3 to the Principal Determination

New Schedule 3 to the Principal Determination provides for the following new Masters courses that were not previously contained in that Schedule:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Education Institution** | **Course** |
| Bond University | Master of Occupational Therapy |
| Cairnmillar Institute School of Counselling and Psychotherapy | Master of Professional Psychology |
| Deakin University | Master of Accounting and International Finance  Master of International Accounting |
| Edith Cowan University | Master of Nursing (Graduate Entry) |
| King’s Own Institute | Master of Accounting  Master of Professional Accounting |
| La Trobe University | Master of Professional Accounting (Business Analytics)  Master of Professional Accounting (Information Systems Management) |
| Murdoch University | Doctor of Veterinary Medicine |
| Queensland University of Technology | Master of Nurse Practitioner  Master of Teaching (Secondary) |
| University of Adelaide | Master of Teaching |
| University of New England | Doctor of Medicine |
| University of Newcastle | Doctor of Medicine |
| University of Technology, Sydney | Master of Physiotherapy |
| University of Wollongong | Doctor of Medicine |

Removal of Masters courses in Schedule 3 to the Principal Determination

New Schedule 3 to the Principal Determination omits the Masters courses in the following table that were previously contained in Schedule 3 to the Principal Determination. These courses have been removed as students are no longer enrolled in them.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Education Institution** | **Course** |
| Bond University | Master of Property Valuation |
| Curtin University | Master of Commerce (Information Systems and Technology Major)  Master of Information Technology  Master of Logistics |
| James Cook University | Master of Applied Science (Tropical Urban and Regional Planning)  Master of Information Technology (Extended) |
| Murdoch University | Master of Pharmacy |
| University of Canberra | Master of Business Administration in Strategic Procurement |
| University of South Australia | Master of Business Information Systems  Master of Psychology (Work and Organisational) |
| University of Southern Queensland | Master of Informational Technology (Professional) (MITP)  Master of Informational Technology (Professional) (MT16) |
| University of the Sunshine Coast | Master of Mental Health Nursing |

*Courses that have changed names*

New Schedule 3 renames a number of courses. The old courses that have new course names are shown in the following table:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Education Institution** | **Old course name** | **New course name** |
| Charles Sturt University | Master of Clinical Exercise Physiology (Rehabilitation) | Master of Clinical Exercise Physiology |
|  | Master of Information Technology | Master of Information Technology (with Specialisations) |
|  | Master of Teaching (Primary) | Master of Teaching (Primary) |
|  | Master of Teaching English as a Second or Other Language (TESOL) | Master of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages |
| La Trobe University | Master of Marketing Management | Master of Marketing |
| Murdoch University | Master of International Affairs | Master of International Affairs and Security |
| Queensland University of Technology | Master of Social Work | Master of Social Work (Qualifying) |
| RMIT University | Master of Applied Science (Geospatial Information) | Master of Geospatial Science |
| University of Melbourne | Master of Science (Geography) | Master of Geography |
| University of Notre Dame | Master of Teaching (Primary) | Master of Teaching (Primary Education) |
| University of South Australia | Master of Information Communication and Technology Management (Enterprise Systems) | Master of Information Technology (Enterprise Management) |
| Victoria University | Master of Psychology (Clinical Psychology) | Master of Applied Psychology (Clinical Psychology) |
|  | Master of Teaching (Primary) | Master of Teaching (Primary Education) |
|  | Master of Teaching (Secondary) | Master of Teaching (Secondary Education) |

Where a course has been renamed, the previously named course has been retained in the Schedule.  This will ensure that a person who commenced studying the previously named course continues to be undertaking a tertiary course for the purpose of the Act.

Charles Sturt University’s Master of Teaching (Primary) is being reinstated after the course was removed from the Determination in error in 2015.

**Statement of Compatibility with Human Rights**

*Prepared in accordance with Part 3 of the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011*

*Student Assistance (Education Institutions and Courses) Amendment Determination 2017 (No. 1)*

The *Student Assistance (Education Institutions and Courses) Amendment Determination 2017 (No. 1)* is compatible with the human rights and freedoms recognised or declared in the international instruments listed in section 3 of the *Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011*.

**Overview of the Legislative Instrument**

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Subsection 5D(1) of the Act provides that the Minister may, for the purposes of the Act, determine in writing that:

1. a course of study or instruction is a secondary course, or a tertiary course; or
2. a part of a course of study or instruction is a part of a secondary course or part of a tertiary course.

The Amendment Determination amends the *Student Assistance (Education Institutions and Courses) Determination 2009 (No. 2)* (Principal Determination). The Principal Determination broadly outlines the institutions and courses for the purpose of subsections 3(1) and 5D(1) of the Act, specifying multiple levels of study at higher education institutions and registered training organisations.

The Amendment Determination amends the list of Masters courses in Schedule 3 to the Principal Determination by adding new courses, replacing the names of existing courses and removing existing courses. Courses have been removed only where there are no longer any students enrolled in those courses.

The Masters courses listed in Schedule 3 are the Masters courses provided by higher education providers that are “tertiary courses” for the purposes of the Act.  In turn, the determination of these courses as tertiary courses for the purposes of the Act allows people studying those courses to qualify for certain student payments under social security law, such as youth allowance, austudy payment and the pensioner education supplement and also ABSTUDY (provided they meet the other eligibility criteria for those payments).

**Human rights implications**

The Amendment Determination engages the following human rights:

*Right to Education*

The Amendment Determination engages the right to education contained in Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

By determining that certain Masters courses are “tertiary courses”, which in turn assists people studying those courses to qualify for certain student payments, the Amendment Determination may enable students to access education and therefore will be compatible with human rights.

*Right to Social Security*

The Amendment Determination engages the right to social security contained in Article 9 of the ICESCR. A student undertaking courses specified in Schedule 3 may qualify for certain student payments under social security law, such as youth allowance, austudy payment, the pensioner education supplement and also ABSTUDY (provided they meet the other eligibility criteria for those payments).

**Conclusion**

The Amendment Determination is compatible with human rights as it enables students to access education and social security payments.

**Minister for Social Services, the Hon Christian Porter MP**