On 1 January the Student Start-up Loan replaced the Student Start-up Scholarship and is available to new student payment recipients (Youth Allowance (student), Austudy or ABSTUDY Living Allowance) undertaking higher education. It is a voluntary income-contingent loan which students can apply for to help with the costs of study. The Loan will be paid a maximum of twice per year, generally at the beginning of each semester. Each Loan payment is valued at $1,025 (to be indexed from 1 January 2017).

Students will be required to repay the Loan once their income exceeds the minimum repayment threshold, currently at $54,126 for 2015-16. Payment arrangements will be managed by the Australian Taxation Office in the same manner as the Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) debts. Repayment of the Loan will be delayed until after any HELP debt is completely repaid.

Note: students who have previously received a Student Start-up Scholarship or Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarship and remained continuously in receipt of student payments, will continue to receive the Student Start-up Scholarship as a grant until coming off student payments.

For more information, please see the news section of the Study Assist website at www.studyassist.gov.au.